

Creating together

turn2

Artistic Co-Creation
between Germany and
African countries

Nairobi, Dakar, Tunis

TURN2 Labs 2022–2023

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Welcome Address

How do we want to work together in the future? This question was the starting point for the TURN2 Labs in Nairobi, Dakar and Tunis held between November 2022 and June 2023. The Labs explored alternative concepts of knowledge and the archive, proposals for communal living, and artistic responses to climate change. This search for new forms of exchange characterizes the final phase of the TURN2 programme for Artistic Co-Creation between Germany and African Countries. Since 2012, the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) has funded transcontinental projects and networks involving the African continent as part of the TURN and TURN2 programmes. These programmes followed a central principle: that current and future global challenges can only be overcome in cooperation with international partners, especially those outside of Europe. Consequently, we must learn – and we wish to learn – new ways of working together in the future.

A total of 121 cooperative projects have been created as part of the TURN and TURN2 programme. Each of them reflects in its own way the relationship, both tense and dynamic, between often very different partners. Climate change, colonialism, migration, systems of knowledge and historical narratives, language and translation, as well as the continuous influence of international economic players on the African continent – these topics and global challenges had a formative influence on the programme. Their impact has increased the need for European cultural scenes to reflect critically on their own historical and cultural position and to incorporate other perspectives, particularly African ones.

TURN and TURN2 have proven to be game-changers for the Kulturstiftung des Bundes. It has become clear that we need to spend more time on certain forms of transcontinental project work so that we can better understand the cultural, political and historical contexts from which various contributions have emerged. “Working together” also involves increasing transparency and developing new solution strategies to address prevailing asymmetries – for example, in the use of funding.

Against this background, we are making it possible to experiment with a new form of transcontinental cooperation in the future.

Building on the experience of TURN and TURN2, the Kulturstiftung des Bundes launched the Transcontinental Partnerships programme (working title) in summer 2023, which will support long-term collaborations between German cultural scenes and partners in Africa, Latin America, and various regions of Asia between 2024 and 2030. We will pay particular attention to the joint development of fair and sustainable programme guidelines, an extended period of funding, and the facilitation of intense research and work visits, which will allow participants to become better acquainted with each other and develop in-depth cooperative projects. The TURN2 Labs have also paved the way for this kind of approach, providing a place for people to meet and a protected space for reflection where a new way of working together can be explored.

Our heartfelt thanks go to everyone who took part in and collaborated on the TURN2 Labs and whose ideas, thoughts, contributions, and willingness to exchange views brought the Labs to life. We would particularly like to thank our partner organizations in Kenya, Senegal and Tunisia and their respective teams: the Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute (NCAI), KENU – Lab’Oratoire des Imaginaires in Dakar, and L’Art Rue in Tunis. Their ideas and organizational design gave the Labs their form and greatly contributed to making them possible. We would also like to highlight the extraordinary commitment and active organizational support of the Goethe-Institutes in Nairobi, Dakar, and Tunis. Thanks are due to everyone for this extraordinary cooperative effort, and we hope that the Labs will provide rich inspiration for exploring how we want to work, think, and live together as an international community in the future.

Katarzyna Wielga-Skolimowska
Executive Board / Artistic Director

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Kirsten Haß
Executive Board / Administrative Director

Kulturstiftung des Bundes
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Living Together, Creating Together

About the TURN2 Labs

by Martha Kazungu and Anne Fleckstein

In times of global pandemics, climate change, an ongoing struggle for resources and large-scale migration movements, the concept of planetary rethinking is imperative. Global issues can no longer be located solely in dichotomous world views in which our perceptions and knowledge are structured by binaries such as nature and culture, developed and underdeveloped worlds, mind and body or orality and writing. Rather, a much more all-encompassing consideration of the complex political, economic, emotional, technical, cultural and spiritual entanglements of relationships in which human beings are embedded seems necessary in order to face global and planetary challenges.

The inevitability of this rethinking is particularly evident in the international artistic cooperation with the African continent. Working together on overcoming binary perceptions is the prerequisite here for the decolonisation of knowledge and power structures and a multi-perspective approach. In this context, the notion of “together” must be questioned and redefined more than ever. The question of how we will work and create together is nothing less than the question of how we will live together on the planet. International artistic cooperation takes on the task of making visible the worlds’ indivisibility, of making palpable neuralgic points of global power relations and of negotiating visions of future co-existence and fair co-creation.

It is against this background that, after ten years of promoting artistic cooperation between Germany and African countries, the TURN2 programme of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) initiated the TURN2 Labs in Nairobi, Dakar and Tunis. From November 2022 to June 2023, three Labs were realised in close collaboration with the Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute (NCAI) in Nairobi, KENU – Lab’Oratoire des Imaginaires in Dakar and L’Art Rue in Tunis. These so-called “collaboratories” – laboratories of cooperation – were conceived as three day events,

each with up to 30 participants from Europe and Africa. The Labs invited cultural scholars and practitioners to come together in non-public workshops to discuss and work together in solidarity on themes that would shape artistic coexistence and the cultural scenes across the continents in the future. Part of the process was that the Kulturstiftung itself ventured into a new form of fair cooperation and handed over the thematic, curatorial and organisational lead of the Labs to its cooperation partners. With the administrative support of the Goethe-Institutes in Nairobi, Dakar and Tunis, this allowed for the partners to develop questions and thematic foci that highlight the African perspectives and interests in transcontinental relations and adapt the programmes to local contexts. The Labs emphasise the specific character of physical meetings which foster the kind of dialogue, connection and friendship that are indispensable for a trustworthy collaboration and for laying the foundation for a community across continents.

For the first TURN2 Lab in Nairobi in November 2022, our partner NCAI chose the theme *Experiencing Nairobi as Felt Time. The City as Archive* to deal with alternative practices and artistic strategies of archiving, counter-narratives of history and temporal experience in urban space. While in Europe the desire for a “shared history” with the goal of a retelling of colonial history is becoming louder and louder, the fundamental question arises as to whose stories are told in which part of the world – and which resources they draw on to do so. What does it mean to decolonize historical narratives? What role do institutional archives play in this process, and under what conditions did they emerge? Can we break free from a concept of knowledge that claims objectivity and has left little room for subjective and local perceptions of events? Against the backdrop of these questions, which have played an important role in the projects supported by TURN and TURN2 for years, the first TURN2 Lab in Nairobi reexamined the concept

of archiving and acknowledged alternative ways of local, curatorial, artistic and imaginative perception and knowledge that could form the basis of shared resources to story-telling.

The question of archiving and ecologies of knowledge was taken up and continued by the artistic collective KENU for the second TURN2 Lab in Dakar in March 2023, which explored new forms of relational economies, epistemic systems and community building that embrace a holistic understanding of planetary knowledge and coexistence under the title *JOKKO – Relations. From Theory to Practices*. The Wolof word for communication and connection *jokko* points to the epistemic and ontological core of this topic: knowledge is connection, as KENU puts it, between people, things, animals, practices, worlds or places. The Lab thus not only posed the question of what knowledge is and how differently it is perceived in the world, but also how we want to move in the different relational systems in the future and how we can shape a planetary community beyond geographical boundaries.

Planetary questions were also at the heart of the third TURN2 Lab in Tunis in May 2023 organised by L'Art Rue, which took place under the theme *Climate Crisis / Crisis of Imagination*. It focused on the role of artistic creation for sustainable action on the African continent as well as possibilities for transcontinental artistic action and alternative imaginaries, also addressing issues of climate justice and artistic activism. How can we work together artistically and fairly towards sustainable living in the future? Who defines sustainability? How can local challenges and global developments be translated into artistic action? It is these questions about a future sustainable way of living and creating that concluded the small series of TURN2 Labs and at the same time opened our eyes for the current and future challenges of artistic collaboration between continents.

Transcontinental networks are in a constant process of building and overcoming challenges. Building as a notion illustrates the ongoing process and the structural dependence of each component and capacity that pursues with skill the gradual establishment of something solid, protective, and overarching. The TURN2 Labs are about leaning on each other in the present while building together a future. They started a conversation about common visions and future ways of working hand in hand and, ultimately, can help build relationships of fair collaboration that lean on mutuality not compliance. These relationships reflect the entanglement and the indivisibility of our times in which fostering togetherness across continents in creating and living is not an option but the only way to go forward.

Martha Kazungu (Uganda) is a curator and art historian. She founded Njabala Foundation in 2021 to render visibility for women artists and co-curated the TURN2 Labs.

Anne Fleckstein (Germany) is head of the programme TURN2 for Artistic Co-creation between Germany and African Countries at the Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi

**Experiencing
Nairobi as
Felt Time.
The City
as Archive**

**3–6 November 2022
Nairobi Contemporary
Art Institute (NCAI)**

Experiencing Nairobi as Felt Time

The City as Archive

by NCAI (Don Handa, Martha Kazungu and Rosie Olang' Odhiambo)

“I have embraced the document, which isn't to suggest any fidelity to the truth or authority of the document, but simply that I have tried to figure out what I might do with the official document, given the limits, the lies, the omissions, the fabrications ...”¹

“The concept of city-as-archive suggests an analogical relationship between cities and archives in terms of form and raises the question of the limits of each form. In formulating the relation between cities and archives, I suggest that we are able to interrogate both the limits of the principles by which archives are constituted as well as the problem of belonging by which the city is constituted as a demographic space.”²

What is an archive?

Archives are not neutral collections of empirical data/evidence of objects, people, and events. In actuality, they are constituted as bodies of authoritative knowledge about objects, people and events that are presumed to be absent by the time at which the archives are encountered. The forms that archives take necessarily reflect the dominant languages through which that memory is formed. The Cameroonian historian and political theorist Achille Mbembe defines the term “archive” in relation to a building, a symbol of a public institution, which is one of the organs of a constituted state but also as a collection of documents – normally written documents – kept in this building. He argues that there cannot be a definition of “archive” that does not encompass both the building itself and the documents stored there.³

In the context of the debates around museums, objects and heritage, the notion of the archive is a highly contested and yet rather narrow one in the relationships between Africa and Europe. There is a need to extend this notion and redefine where the sources of knowledge come from and how they are represented. What if an archive is not frozen in time, but everchanging, like the urban landscape? How can we share knowledge if our sources of information are fluid? Could the city as an archive be regarded as a move of empowerment to decolonise Western assumptions of how knowledge is preserved? New ways of thinking the archive are necessary in order to emancipate itself from Eurocentric fixations and reinvent new epistemic approaches.

How can we regard the city as archive?

The ephemeral character of cities are symptomatic of the highly dynamic environment and stream of information that we are confronted with all over the world. A city is a collection of people, places, lives, which when considered together do not fit tidily into any single identifying category. It is a body comprising many members whose activities and relationships intertwine in a shared space. These disparate groups come together based on previous connections, and in their coming together, new relationships emerge, and different forms of knowledge are actively created. These interactions actively produce an archive that not only illustrates the connections between these groups, but also generates new connections.

How do you feel time? What remains of the felt time?

The TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi concept *Experiencing Nairobi as Felt Time*. *The City as Archive* proposes a physical exploration of Nairobi as a place, while extending the modes of the archive not just within the documents but in other carriers of the archive such as people, place, and culture.

What passages of time are evident in the archive?

Engaging with the past in the present, and framing the history of Nairobi, and the participants' experience of it as ongoing and malleable, the Lab creates a durational experience that channels memory, engages with public space, culture, and document to learn more about the social, and political histories of the city. How do we consider individual narratives against the backdrop of collective memories? How does our role as cultural workers in different capacities connect people where we live and work, and engage them as authors of their own histories and archives? The Lab centres play, experimentation and improvisation by creating room for real time responsive engagement of the participants with different modes of the archive.

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Don Handa (Kenya) is curator at the Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute (NCAI) where he leads the delivery of exhibition and programmes. He co-curated the TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi.

Rosie Olang' Odhiambo (Kenya) is a writer, artist and curator based in Nairobi and previously served as head of programmes at NCAI. She is the co-founder of MagicDoor, an experimental imprint. She co-curated the TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi.

Martha Kazungu (Uganda) is a curator and art historian. She founded Njabala Foundation in 2021 to render visibility for women artists and co-curated the TURN2 Labs.

“The Future Wants Different Things for Different Places”

Fadzai Muchemwa in conversation with Martha Kazungu and Anne Fleckstein

Anne Fleckstein: Fadzai, what was your experience with the TURN2 Lab in Nairobi?

Fadzai Muchemwa: I was interested in visiting Nairobi which has a fascinating place in the art world and also was curious about Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute which promises to be a very important place for knowledge production on the continent. I quite enjoyed meeting and networking with cultural practitioners I had never met before. The *Sound of Nairobi* project that we were introduced to during the TURN2 Lab particularly touched me as I have been thinking about my curatorial practice as one that embodies walking, doing and listening. *Sound of Nairobi* really oriented me to how sound can be an entryway into understanding space and archiving a living city.

Martha Kazungu: You describe yourself as a researcher and a curator. What kind of curator are you? What is curating to you?

FM: I see myself as a kind of conduit, like a collaborator. There is an audience, and there are artists. Artists who are working in either subject matter or mediums that I'm particularly interested in. And I am obsessed with process. So what you see in an exhibition is not of particular interest to me. I'm particularly interested in spending time in the studio, talking about what inspires artists and seeing them work, seeing the process from conceptualization right through the implementation of whatever it is that they are doing. I am interested in issues of care because it's not just caring for artworks, caring for

artists, but caring for even the collaborators who work with artists.

MK: How does your curatorial process relate to the theme of archive and knowledge?

FM: I see archiving as a process-based practice already. It is quite interesting to me who decides what to archive, what is archived and the stories that are contained in the archived artefacts. I am interested in transitions and archives are a good way to track these. Tracking social justice, knowledge production and departures becomes easier with the existence of archives. I am also curious in the missing stories and what is not collected and archived. Archives are quite impressive when you think of a systematic way of collecting and categorising a narrative. The power that exists in any archive is mind-bending as it often forms the basis of dominance.

MK: In Nairobi, we spoke a lot about alternative archives.

FM: From institutional archives, I would like to distinguish living archives. My grandmother is 85 years old and she incorporates all the information about our family, about our community. Plenty of stories are not stored in archive buildings but live in communities and in family members.

AF: You have worked a lot with partners or partner institutions from Europe. What do you

think about these collaborations? What are the challenges?

FM: Collaborations are always necessary. The institution I work for, the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, once collaborated with the Makerere Art Gallery in Kampala and Städtische Galerie Bremen for the *Kabbo ka Muwala* travelling exhibition, funded by TURN. It is quite a challenge to have an exhibition moving in the continent and then travelling to Europe. The creative process often dominates the administration side hence the project coordinators Lydia Potts and Katherina Hoffmann eventually came to Harare and were working with our finances. I feel that these collaborations need clarity in terms of how to handle funding. That needs to be stressed more than anything else. There must be transparency in what the budget is like and what the rules are and where the money comes from.

MK: What other challenges have you faced in transnational collaborations?

FM: For the Venice Biennial in 2022, I curated the Zimbabwean pavilion. I realised that whilst national pavilions are very important to talk about the story of a nation, it is always hard to do – because you can never fully represent a nation where you have more than five languages in maybe 10 or 15 artworks. The challenges that I noticed in Venice was that people have a superficial engagement with the exhibition because it is so vast. There is very little engagement with the actual work. So it becomes more of a public relation collaboration.

AF: In how far are these international collaborations relevant to the art scene in Zimbabwe and to your institution?

FM: No process is perfect or ideal sometimes, but it is important to engage with the outside world, to engage with everyone, and to learn from other people. Transcontinental collaboration is necessary because we need to take care of the diaspora, and the diaspora lives in communities that might not necessarily be similar to what is happening on the continent. Collaborations between African and European actors enable networks and interventions that could find solutions for common challenges.

MK: The TURN2 Lab in Nairobi brought together cultural producers from various parts of Africa as well as Europe. How could such convenings affect artistic practices in the near future?

FM: Events like the TURN2 Labs can be a very important resource for shaping our future. It would be very important to have networks where we can talk about particular things. For example, if I am at a loss while working on a project, and I am looking for artists from Tanzania or from the Congo, it would be nice if I could reach out to that network. If curators want to come on board and co-curate, or if they know artists that I could work with from their country. With these networks we grow our knowledge base as well as what is happening in the continent.

MK: What are the biggest challenges for the Zimbabwean art scene in the future?

FM: I think it has mostly to do with representation because essentially there's one commercial gallery which is the First Floor Gallery. Artists in Zimbabwe are mainly organised in collectives, they run their own spaces or art centres. If artists do not belong to one of those groups or if they are not affiliated with the First Floor Gallery, it becomes difficult to sell work, get recognition because they are possibly working in isolation. So most of the artists then move to South Africa because there are more commercial galleries, there is better infrastructure to support them.

AF: Transnational collaboration became nearly impossible between 2020 and 2022 when cultural practitioners were faced with the pandemic.

FM: What the pandemic showed us was that we were ill-prepared to take care of ourselves. People were literally days away from being food-insecure when the pandemic hit. When South Africa started rolling out their vaccine, there were places where you had to register to get the vaccine and foreigners had to pay. So it became: "Oh, you are foreign, you do not have the papers to be here. You need to regularise your stay." And it was soon after that I intended to stay in South Africa for a lot longer, but I became quite disillusioned by how the government incited citizens to turn against their neighbours who were not locals – when things don't work out, the first person to be attacked is the foreigner. But I realised that this kind of insular world wasn't just a South African thing, it was a global thing. People were now thinking in terms of taking care of their own. So the world became insulated that way. With the climate changing, we do not have enough food to feed the world, and we are taking too long to find solutions to that. People have been thinking about combating climate change, but not taking care of the rest of the things that make everyone insecure.

AF: What role could artistic practice or cultural practitioners play in this context?

FM: This question takes me back to my interest in process-based practices and socially engaged art. There are communities who are working at the intersection of art and agriculture who realise that you can't make art if you're hungry and you have to take care of each other. So people live and work in communities. Thinking of the future in a more general way, I think that the future wants different things for different places. For the African continent, the future possibly requires a different approach to how we do business and how we live. The future of artistic practice for example, in my view lies in multiple forms of collectivity regarding the production of cultural goods and services as well as knowledge production. This method is already working in various forms in Zimbabwe, Ghana, South Africa, Senegal, Egypt and other African countries.

Fadzai Muchemwa (Zimbabwe) is a researcher and curator. She is currently the Curator for Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe. She was a participant of the TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi.

If My Grandfather Had Written Me a Letter

by Amina Kadous





If my grandfather had written me a letter was an interactive installation that was shown at Darb 1718 Contemporary Art and Culture Center as part of the Off-Something Biennale in Cairo in 2018. This installation was my reply to my past, to those people who have left, taking away with them their stories yet leaving behind traces that retell, remind us of our emotions and collective memories and history.

This installation was also a response to my family's abandoned home in El Mehalla El Kubra which, upon discovering a life to my grandfather I never knew existed, triggered all my suppressed feelings and emotions of a silent and a lost past. A past I was not aware of. A whole life unfolding before me. Memories, photos, envelopes, documents, luggage, objects carried on shelves of time and much more. Everything had remained unchanged at my grandparents' home since they passed away. A part of me remained broken.

While exploring my family's house, I started to look at how time was visualized in front of me. The materiality of photos as objects of time – through how they take the life of others, how I felt my grandfather had left me his belongings as a way to know him more and how I discovered that I came to know him more as well through his remaining physical objects. I started to question the dynamics of the

image and the photograph, while also questioning the relationship between the idea of death and the photograph that preserves the embedded moments. From here came the realization of my project. It was through these left-behind memories that I was reintroduced to my grandfather, knowing him more now than ever. From here came the idea of the exhibition, imagining if my grandfather had written me a letter through his left behind tokens of memory.

Each time I visited my family home in El Mehalla, I was teleported into a time machine. I kept thinking if I would recreate this place now, what would I want to see and how would I want to interact with the place. As part of the process of creating the installation, I wanted to re-imagine my family's home but this time not in El Mehalla but rather in a different space and of course a different time. A place that can encompass everyone. A place where people can wander, search, remember and rediscover their own history as well.

Through the process of my work in general and especially in this project, I was experimenting and questioning the idea of a photograph and what makes it. How a photograph can be anything and everything. Breaking beyond the frame of the two-dimensional. How the photograph can be employed and used in different ways to meet the narrative of one's story. Like a puzzle, the installation created a big picture inspired by not only the reality I was experiencing but also the memories of my childhood inside my family's home. Seeking to tell the story of an intergenerational communication through the tokens of those who have left, one corner of the exhibition had been set up as a room of my grandparents, with furniture and curtains. On the large portraits stuck to the walls like wallpaper, there were family photos, documents, letters and postcards revealing a deeply intimate approach. The creation of this familiar space particularly touched the audience, as in the Egyptian culture we are not used to expose our vulnerability. Instead, we have to keep it to ourselves. The room served as a healing space for everyone to embrace and accept their vulnerable feelings, to make peace with their past and their unfinished moments and to dig deep and search for who they are.



Amina Kadous (Egypt) is a visual artist. Her work tackles concepts of memory and identity. She was a participant of the TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi where she presented her project *If my grandfather had written me a letter*.

Arsenal as Living Archive

On Accidental Archivists and Cine-Kinships

by Stefanie Schulte Strathaus

Contemporary archival work is defined less by its object than by its practice: The Arsenal archive does not only consist of analogue film material. It is a collaborative series of interdisciplinary critical research, preservation, digitization, restoration, production, presentation, and exhibition projects. The archivist is no longer the gatekeeper of the archive, who decides what is preserved and accessible. Everyone who interacts with the archive is an archivist.

Arsenal – Institute of Film and Video Art was founded in 1963 to develop a new practice of cinema. As it was very difficult to locate and rent international films, Arsenal began to collect them. In 1971, Arsenal organised the first edition of the Berlinale Forum in response to a political scandal during the 1970 Berlin International Film Festival.¹ One of the founding ideas was to provide German subtitled prints of the selected films to make them available in other parts of West Germany and German-speaking countries after the festival. These films then stayed with Arsenal.

Other films were given to Arsenal to find shelter, to escape censorship, or because they were not considered national heritage in their respective countries of origin. Or simply because the filmmakers wanted their films to be kept among those that were already there. The collection emerged from the practice of curating, and thus represents transnational networks, friendships, alliances, and communities of solidarity. If there is anything that connects these films, it is the individual and shared search for the other, a history of resistance, aesthetically, culturally, socially, politically, their inherent critique of the mechanisms of exclusion and canonization. Maybe this is what you would call a counter-archive. Such an archive becomes a laboratory for critically reflecting on the category of film heritage which is a concept opposed to the archive as a repository of

cultural heritage, strictly defined as national heritage, in which the archivist is to safeguard the archive.

Today, new forms of (mostly digital) access, interdisciplinary research and decolonial discourse are transforming artists, curators and other cultural practitioners into new archivists and challenge the concept of national heritage. During the project *Living Archive – Archive work as contemporary artistic and curatorial practice* (2011–2013) artists, filmmakers, musicians, curators, and scholars were invited to research the archive. Digitization and restoration became a necessary part of new projects developed by the participants. Thus, old films took on a new life in a contemporary context. The archive had been set in motion.

Obviously, visitors to the archive did not take anything away (as archivists used to fear) but rather added their knowledge and ideas to it. Therefore, Arsenal opened the archive to the public and from then on considered every visitor an archivist. More and more unique prints were discovered in the Arsenal archive. In order to restore them and to return them to their countries of origin, old international relationships were re-established. New ones were built when people, often with no archival background, contacted us to inform us that they had found films in abandoned places while they were researching something else.

One of them, Nigerian filmmaker and film critic Didi Cheeka gave them the name “accidental archivists”, while Portuguese artist Filipa César established the term “cine-kinship” to speak about networks and collaborations emerging from archives.

A long version of this paper was presented during the TURN2 Lab Nairobi which analyses archives as political practice. It presents three collaborative projects from

recent years linking the Arsenal, Mediateca Onshore in Guinea Bissau, Cimatheque – Alternative Film Centre in Egypt and Lagos Film Society in Nigeria. Filipa César, Tamer El Said and Didi Cheeka first met during an Arsenal project called *Visionary Archive*, funded by TURN in 2015.²

1 In 2011 Filipa César met the Guinean filmmakers Sana N’Hada and Flora Gomes. They re-visited an abandoned archive of primarily unedited film and audio material from the period of militant cinema in Guinea-Bissau. The footage testified to the birth of Guinean cinema as part of the decolonising vision of the liberation leader Amílcar Cabral. In 1967, Sana N’Hada and Flora Gomes had been given the opportunity to learn film making at the Cuban film institute ICAIC. Upon their return in 1972, they started filming the independence struggles in Guinea Bissau and eventually founded the National Film Institute INCA in the aftermath of independence. Most of their film material had been destroyed in the civil war of 1998/99 while the rest was in a precarious state caused by the vinegar syndrome.

Filipa got in touch with Arsenal, however, just before the material of the abandoned archive could be shipped to Berlin for digitization a coup d’état created an unexpected urgency. The material had to be packed hastily within one week which led to several film fragments sticking together on one reel, sometimes wrong-sided or upside down. It was in this state the films were digitised, and viewed for the first time, upside down or backwards or both. The resulting arbitrarily combined perspectives found their way into Filipa’s later film *Spell Reel*.

Another interesting aspect was that the audio material had been digitised separately. However, it was almost impossible to synchronise image and sound as intended. So, when the idea came up to organise a mobile cinema project across the country in Guinea-Bissau in 2014 and 2015 in order to present the footage to the public for the first time, Sana N’Hada and Flora Gomes decided to do live-comments of the images while showing. The out-of-sync situation allowed for them to frequently change their live comments according to context. Many of the viewers, especially younger generations, had not even heard about these struggles before and now they didn’t only see the images but also heard a live oral narrative. The mobile cinema tour finally ended in Berlin at Prinzessinnengarten.

2 When Cimatheque – Alternative Film Center in Cairo was being built during the Egyptian revolution of 2011 and the following years, documentary filmmaker Atteyat

Al Abnoudy asked if she could donate her collection of film material: Her own films which she made in Egypt in the 1970s and 80s, collected films, and a paper archive. Archiving films, however, had not been the intention of Cimatheque. “We are opening a cinema”, its founding director Tamer El Said said, “not an archive”. But Al Abnoudy insisted and soon other filmmakers and members of the film community started donating material. When Cimatheque presented Abnoudy’s films at Arsenal in 2019, an audience member found out that she had worked with the same cinematographer as the famous German filmmaker Helke Sander and had both been members of a transnational feminist film network in the 1970s. These connections created further knowledge that extended and transformed the archive and the narrative it generates. Today, Cimatheque hosts more than 15,000 items representing priceless collections of legendary icons in Egyptian film history and is a central partner of Arsenal in creating alternative “living archives”.

3 In 2014, Didi Cheeka, film maker, critic and co-founder of the Lagos Film Society, and Marc-André Schmachtel from Goethe-Institut checked out the former rooms of the Colonial Film Unit, later National Film Corporation (NFC) in Lagos as a potential independent cinema location. They stumbled across old film reels and contacted Arsenal. From what I first saw I assumed that the films were probably lost because of their bad condition. Didi replied: “If this is true then we should reconstruct the archive based on oral history.”

My colleague from Arsenal and I went to Lagos and inspected the reels using mobile equipment that had been built for Filipa’s research in Guinea-Bissau. We found out that the majority of those holdings had been brought to a vault in Jos in Nigeria, so the National Film Corporation (NFC) invited us to visit the National Film, Video and Sound Archive in Jos, where we found more negative and positive elements of the films, but in better condition. Among the reels, Didi Cheeka discovered the title *Shaihu Umar*, a film by Adamu Halili from 1976 that had been thought to be lost. It is based on a novel from 1955 by Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, who later became prime minister of Nigeria. Originally written in Hausa language, it tells the story of the slave trade and migration between Egypt and Nigeria. Arsenal digitally restored the film which later showed not only in Lagos and Berlin but also at Cimatheque in Cairo.

As a result of the discovery of the reels and collaboration of these organisations, the NFC and the Nigerian Film Institute in Lagos, the Goethe University in Frankfurt, the Lagos Film Society, DFF – Deutsches

Filminstitut & Filmmuseum and Arsenal collaboratively developed a master's programme in film archiving and film culture at the University of Jos, funded by DAAD.

Arsenal's mandate as a film institution whose long history is based on western concepts such as "world cinema" has changed throughout the years and raises new questions today. Over the decades a curatorial practice had turned into a decentralised archival responsibility. At the same time, it became clear that the Arsenal archive is only a small part of a much larger archive scattered around the world. New modes of access and curation are changing our understanding of archives. The discovery of new, often precarious repositories open up an archival space beyond the established frameworks of (mostly national) heritage institutions.

Counter-archives – such as non-institutional initiatives by filmmakers, private collections or personal narratives – set the archival landscape in motion. These ideas were at the core of the TURN2 Lab in Nairobi in November 2022 that dealt with the question of how cities can be understood as archives beyond the institutional notion. These new forms of archives call for counter proposals, for new, contemporary constellations. Filmmakers, artists, curators, critics and scholars become "accidental archivists" and build transnational "cine-kinships". The new archive emerges as a place where they collaborate to shape the future of cinema, based on remnants of the past. Like the films that they house, they develop a new language, new knowledge as well as new cultural, social and political spaces and possibilities for action – which we urgently need right now.

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- 1 The founding of Berlinale Forum goes back to the crisis of the Berlin Film Festival in 1970, when disputes over the screening of Michael Verhoeven's film *O.K.*, a parable on the Vietnam War, led to the festival's cancellation. In 1969 and 1970, the Friends of the German Cinematheque (today: Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art) had already organised a parallel event to the Berlinale on their own initiative. After the cancellation, they received the official offer to be responsible for an equivalent independent festival programme, the then so-called International Forum of Young Cinema, which today is known as Berlinale Forum and continues to be hosted independently by Arsenal.
- 2 Arsenal – Institut für Film und Videokunst e.V. Visionary Archive, <https://www.arsenal-berlin.de/en/archive-distribution/archive-projects/visionary-archive-2013-2015/>.

Stefanie Schulte Strathaus (Germany) is the artistic director of Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art in Berlin. At TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi, she presented Arsenal as one example of an alternative practice of archiving in Germany.

Creating Archival Photographs

by Ifebusola Shotunde









Ifebusola Shotunde (Nigeria) is a photographer, designer and filmmaker, based in Ibadan, Nigeria. In his works, he explores the engagement of people as co-authors of their own histories and audio-visual archives. He was a participant of the TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi.

Enough Ethnography, Imagine Something Beautiful

On Critical Fabulation as Archive Building

by Wanini Kimemiah

Too often when it comes to archives created by an oppressor class about the people they oppress, many liberties are taken to make the story more palatable to them and the audience they write for. For instance, there is a large number of books written by British soldiers of the colonial period about their many fantastical exploits in their areas of deployment for the people in Britain, told as some kind of whacky adventure, often with a sensational title such as John Boyes' *How I Became the King of the Wa-Kikuyu*. In her essay *Venus in Two Acts* from 2008, the American author and scholar Saidiya Hartman contemplates on the fiction of the archive. Often, she claims, history pertaining to Black people is written by their various subjugators, colonists or slavers. This inevitably means their narratives on the subject are fictionalised as a way to justify their oppression, or confirm their bias. In her essay, Hartman writes about how on slave ships during the transatlantic slave trade, the slavers would cast their sexual abuse of slave women as some kind of mutual, romantic goings-on instead of the egregious brutality that it was. The invention of the eponymous Venus character in these records of slavers both on ships and in America was a placeholder for this Black woman who was irresistible and available and willing to engage with her captors as though they were equals. This, of course, is a fantasy, a fabulation of its own.

However, through the half-truths of the colonisers' narratives and archives, it is possible to extrapolate the humanity and agency of the people it describes so unkindly, and imagine their lives as the full human beings they were. Critical fabulation, therefore, is a powerful tool in the reclamation of the past. In this essay, it asks: how can the archive be reclaimed and rewritten to

paint a more honest, more human picture of our dearly departed forebears, who had no choice but to endure the cruel whims of their oppressors? What can we glean of the hopes, dreams, loves, worries or mundanities of the lives of the people we encounter in these archives? In reference to TURN2 Lab Nairobi's theme *Experiencing Nairobi as Felt Time. The City as Archive*, Hartman's text lays the foundation for an alternative understanding of the archive.

Though Hartman may have provided us with the terminology, critical fabulation has long since been a mainstay of the art of Black people the world over, in literary as well as visual and immersive. The Nairobi Lab provided us with the opportunity to examine place as historical archive, and in that the narratives of these spaces and how these stories came to be. Like all capitals of settler colonies, the history of Nairobi is skewed towards having recorded British (and similarly aligned post-colonial governments') interests, with the histories of the indigenous communities they were displacing and subjugating being a footnote. We had the opportunity to participate in an exercise in critical fabulation and understand for ourselves why it is such a powerful tool. Junniah Wamaitha of Sound of Nairobi,¹ a Kenyan collective documenting the city of Nairobi through its soundscapes, gave a presentation during the inaugural Lab session that had us imagine the sound of pre-colonial Nairobi. Then known as Enkare Nairobi, the place of cool waters in Maa, it was a vast wetland teeming with rivers, rivulets and springs. Very little information exists of what the region was before 1900 when it was established as a trading post. We know it was a convergence point for many travellers from all over the region, favoured for its abundant sources of water and foliage,

and at times also a neutral ground where conflict between communities such as the Maasai and the Kikuyu could be hashed out. But what else could Nairobi have been? With critical fabulation we can try to imagine this unrecorded past. Were there places then that people favoured that remain the same today? Conversely, were there places that were avoided that today are also similarly, subconsciously kept away from? Where did a pair of lovers, or friends meet for the first time? I like to imagine every emotion ever felt in Nairobi was felt before by some forebear ages ago, and will be felt by some descendant in a far-off future, connecting us all together in the river of time.

This same methodology can also be applied to Nairobi's post-colonial history, where a different kind of erasure has taken place and continues to. The histories of this city, and Kenya at large, are best approached from behind a veil of imagination, because often, an explicit confrontation of the truth can be dangerous. At Mathare Social Justice Centre², one of the places visited during the Lab, the activists and community members use art and language as a veil. Painting murals imbued in meaning and history and speaking a patois illegible to the state allows them to remember their history and imagine how the people of Mathare, a neighborhood that has historically suffered under the spectre of poverty and over policing since colonial times, have found ways to survive the state and build a vibrant and resilient community.

Similarly, Kenyan-German artist Syowia Kyambi's practice seeks to engage with these difficult and often traumatic archives through her performance character Kaspale. Her performance, *Kaspale's Playground*³ confronts life during president Daniel Arap Moi's 24-year rule, and the violence that underpinned this era. Kaspale provides away to reckon with the heaviness of this period as a trickster who can jump in and out of time (and forbidden places such as the infamous Nyayo House basement that is a central point in this performance) and give an account of these moments. In another project, *Kaspale's Archive Intrusion*⁴ Kyambi digitally inserted images of Kaspale into the photo archives created by German zoologists, Julius Vossler and Dr. Franz Ludwig Stuhlmann in the late 1800s to early 1900s during their time in Tanzania. Now part of the MARKK Museum's archive in Hamburg alongside the original photographs, Kaspale's presence in these

images is a haunting spectre preventing the viewer from falling into nostalgia over this period as is the case with many Europeans who engage with colonial images.

In a more curatorial engagement, the exhibition *Archive of Experiences* curated by Martha Kazungu and Gabriel Schimmeroth, two participants in the TURN2 Lab Nairobi, employed critical fabulation. The exhibition featured a photo album with 352 pictures associated with the city of Singapore.⁵ The photographs are also part of an immense archive of images in the Museum at the Rothenbaum (MARKK) in Hamburg. The curators alongside Ghanaian artist Kelvin Haizel, selected images that produced a cohesive narrative even without context, while grappling with the strong ethnographic gaze of photographs created not to honour the people in them, rather to emphasise them as curiosities from wild and savage lands.

I think of critical fabulation as a decolonial tool. It is an integral part in the reclamation of history, and therefore the future, from a white supremacist narrative of the people it colonises. The activities, discussions and presentations made during the Nairobi Lab demonstrated the necessity of critical fabulation when engaging with the archive. One might even say it is a central analytical tool to approach history with. As ethnographic archives become more accessible to the public, I hope that more people can take back their narratives and imagine a past more real than what we have been told. We may never know the full stories of these people and places that are our kin and our homes, but we can dream up something beautiful that is as good as the truth.

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- 5 The exhibition *Archive of Experiences* was shown during the 8th Triennial of Photography at the MARRK – Museum at the Rothenbaum – Cultures and Arts of the World in Hamburg from May to October 2022.

Wanini Kimemiah (Kenya) is a community-taught, cross-disciplinary visual artist and writer. In their work, they explore themes such as embodiment, presence and perception of time. They participated in the TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi as a *critical friend* to observe and reflect on the exchanges during the Lab.

Impressions



“How do we deal with archives? What history do we remember and what memory becomes history? Working with the inspiring group at TURN2 Lab Nairobi showed once again, we need to include the personal, the artistic, the subjective to create new epistemologies. In the end, it’s about people.”

Isabel Raabe

“Cities are layered existences. Creating archives of these spaces takes collective voluntary and involuntary action triggered by mere engagement. *Sound of Nairobi*, a walk in the city, opened up as well as answered questions of who creates these archives. Is the ephemerality of engaging with sound considered an archive of the city?”

Immy Mali



“My experience in the TURN2 Lab Nairobi was truly surprising and intense, from exploring archives to experiencing the city through its sounds and human pulse, to the presentations and screening moments. I was impressed by the positive impact of the socially engaged actions on the communities. It was a (short but) rich programme.”

Luamba Muinga

“As an artist creating archival photographs of contemporary times, I appreciated interacting with like-minded cultural practitioners from around the world and at different stages in their careers. The Lab inspired fresh perspectives on image production and emphasised the significance of context in presentation and archiving.”

Ifebusola Shotunde



“I thought I knew Nairobi, it being the city of my birth and all. That is until I experienced the city aurally with the guidance of the people at Sound of Nairobi: a whole new city opened up for me, and it felt I was discovering Nairobi for the first time.”

Eric Otieno Sumba



“TURN2 Lab Nairobi drew a neat line through carefully selected instances of geopolitical and socio-economic contexts that frame a city as a generative archive, complemented with critically engaged discourse and great company!

A lasting question for me remains: How much room is afforded to fictioning, while dealing with such active archives?”

Abbey IT-A

“Historical sites, archival infrastructures and contemporary art should be thought together more often. *Experiencing Nairobi as Felt Time* has beautifully demonstrated in an informal way the contact points of a historically and archivally based research and curation with contemporary art. I am very grateful to have participated in the TURN2 Lab Nairobi.”

Gabriel Schimmeroth



“The archive is a powerful tool for uncovering hidden stories, offering us a deeper perspective on our collective journey concerning a place and time, and inspiring us to develop a richer understanding of our shared history and different perspectives on how we tell stories and answer historical questions through what remains of the memories.”

Mary Osaretin Omoregie

TURN2 Lab#2 Dakar

**JOKKO –
Relationalities.
From Theory
to Practices**

**24 – 27 March 2023
KENU – Lab'Oratoire
des Imaginaires**

JOKKO – Relationalities

From Theory to Practices

by KENU – Lab'Oratoire des Imaginaires

With the central proposal of *JOKKO – Relationalities. From Theory to Practices*, the second TURN2 Lab addresses relations to the self, to others and to the environment. These travelling meetings from Dakar to St. Louis (Senegal) associate theory with practice, by inviting researchers, entrepreneurs, cultural practitioners, institutions, traditional healers and artists for three days, to experiment with knowledge, tools and methods. The objective is to articulate various knowledges, actions and initiatives on the territory. Beyond the why, it is the how that we want to experience and investigate. In order to participate in strengthening and linking these different initiatives, we work in the direction of setting in motion alternatives to the instrumental and self-centred logics based on interest and competition. Instead, we are looking for other ways of relating and being present in this world.

In partnership with local institutions, KENU offers an itinerary from Dakar to St. Louis to connect territories and actors from different areas with different and complementary approaches and open a space for articulation and networking. With 30 participants from Africa and Europe, KENU seeks to explore together what connects us, to reflect on how to put into action certain theoretical proposals from the *Atelier de la Pensée* in Dakar, and connect them with the vision of the world among the Lebous of Ouakam, and the relational economy in the eco-village of Ndem which resonates with the entrepreneurship of Hahatay in Gandiol. On the road, we want to take the time to stop, experience the hospitality offered to travelers, form a community, learn from each other's practice, meet weavers of lives, and in the end sit down all together in order to take stock of the experiences of the joint road trip in order to reinvent mechanisms for common life and imagine a future together. Then set off again to open up paths of possibility and ask ourselves what a platform for the circulation of knowledge and entrepreneurial practices and cultural resources between Africa and the rest of the world might look like.

Living on Earth

by Felwine Sarr

Today I would like to offer you a meditation entitled *Living on Earth* [*Habiter la Terre*]. If we reflect a little on the question of economic, social, and environmental relationships, I think we might agree that this is one of the most pressing challenges of our era. And if we try to find the source of this challenge, we might conclude that it lies in our instrumental relation to what gets called nature, a relation chiefly inherited from occidental modernity's vision of the cosmos. This relation has led us, we humans, to overexploit the resources of the biotope – to such an extent that, today, it seems likely that we are jeopardizing the conditions for the reproduction of life on Earth.

This fact has its roots in a notion of the centrality of human beings within the realm of the living; in a cosmology of human/nature or culture/nature separation; and, too, in the fact that we have transformed all other living beings into objects subordinated exclusively to our human purposes. It seems to me that we have to rethink our way of living on Earth, rethink our connection with the totality of life. The problem of our era is to make life sustainable, in the sense of being able to continue. Above all, we must avoid irreparably compromising the conditions for the habitability of the planet. We have to repair our connection with the totality of life, from which we emanated, and of which we are a part – a connection that our technical civilisation has damaged so badly.

The human community went through a long struggle overcoming the hostility of our ecologies, surviving within them, and gathering the resources that we needed – a long struggle protecting ourselves from our predators, and migrating once we had exhausted the means of subsistence in a given ecological niche. From this old struggle and these old memories, we have retained a troubled relationship to survival and to the means of subsistence. Once technology permitted us to, we began applying ourselves to the domination of our world. Our religious texts turned the animals, the plants, the non-human, and the totality of life into things, entities exclusively at the service of our own flourishing. We placed ourselves on a pedestal. We became the measure of all things, the alpha and omega of cosmic progress, the awakened consciousness of

the universe. We claimed that we alone were capable of speech, of language, of interiority, of sensibility, of reflective intelligence. We became the self-appointed ambassadors of God upon the Earth. We became caliphs or administrators. And our arts and literatures, our speeches and our imaginary constructions indicating the place we granted ourselves at the heart of the universe, have all resounded with this same theme.

We built the world, we erected cities, and then came the crisis; the child of our excess and our hubris, it was a crisis at once economic, ecological, social, environmental, and spiritual. A climate out of joint, a planet inexorably warming up. An economic world and ways of life that accelerate the entropy of the living, a civilisation that spreads barbarity and imperils the permanence of life and the conditions of its reproduction. This crisis, if we view it globally, holistically, is a crisis in our way of inhabiting our original ecological home, the Earth. As quite a number of thinkers have pointed out – including Val Plumwood, Geneviève Azam, and Pierre Madelin – we must abandon our denial of the fact that we belong to the Earth.¹ For a very long time now, we have longed to imagine ourselves being able to cut the umbilical cord and exist in a form of self-creation, of autogenesis, creating and producing the conditions of our own life. Thus denying our belonging to the Earth can in turn translate to a desire for the alterity of what gets called “nature” to be eradicated through subjection to our will. In doing so, we contest its alterity, its agency, its autonomy. The thinkers I mentioned invite us to consider that, in fact, things, living spaces, and everything that exists apart from human ingenuity are gifts that we inherit. Receiving these gifts means embracing the physical and sensory reality of the world. It means recognising the alterity of natural things, the other-than-human foundations of our relation to the world and to our own existence. It is only in this kind of relationship that we will be capable of living on the Earth without destroying it.

There is a difficult balance to be struck between relativising an excessive anthropocentrism, and relativising an ecocentrism that could tend to deny the singularity of our humanity. Obviously, it is impossible to totally avoid any instrumental relation to what gets referred to as

nature. Nevertheless, it is possible to admit that the latter has an irreducible dimension that must be left as it is, that must not depend solely on our purposes, and that has its own agency. The question for us is, rather than thinking about how to live in the world, reflecting anew on how to live on the Earth and how to make community with the totality of life and thus with the Earth's other inhabitants. Our life is fundamentally linked with the resources we draw from this planet. Today, as a species, at the end of every year our consumption exceeds the planet's available resources by 70 percent. We are living on a line of credit provided by the biotope. To continue destroying the living world at this pace, this living world that welcomes us, is not only to make ourselves responsible for an ecocide but to prepare a *futuricide* as well.

Our survival is no longer simply linked to biotechnologies and to the natural conditions of life, but to a whole – to complexly interdependent assemblages of humans, non-humans, machines, social systems, and the social, territorial, and political organisations that enable us to live. It is no longer just a matter of satisfying the needs of the body that allow the body to persist. Of course, that is one of the prerequisites of life. But a liveable life must go further than biological survival. And this is most certainly a question of knowing what a good life is. At the individual level, but also at a societal level, as well as on the even broader scales at which our human lives articulate themselves. Thus, thinking a liveable life means drawing out the consequences of the fact that our existence depends on support systems that are simultaneously both human and non-human. The very complex relations constituting bodily and social life should lead us to consider the entire set of relations on which we depend. And it is here that the questions of connection and of relationality are absolutely fundamental.

Leading a good life likewise means envisioning and thinking anthropologies and ontologies that are relational. We can no longer figure ourselves within ontologies or anthropologies that are atomised, individualised, or tied to our own limited, personal life. They are linked with the entirety of the relationships that we lead, with the totality of life, with social worlds, with all the various kinds of human and non-human assemblage. That's why the problem of reconnecting is fundamental, and permits us to envisage life within a complex and interdependent whole. Our urgent task is to rethink the ethical, philosophical, and especially the imagined foundations of our relation to the living, and to take notice of the fact that our human condition is consubstantial with that of the living and with the interactions that we foster

with it. This might seem obvious, yet the way we articulate our relation to the whole intricate complexity of the living world might suggest a certain forgetfulness of this initial, fundamental given. For this, we must cooperate with all of the communities of beings, and establish relations of mutuality with them that are founded on reciprocity, care, and reparation.

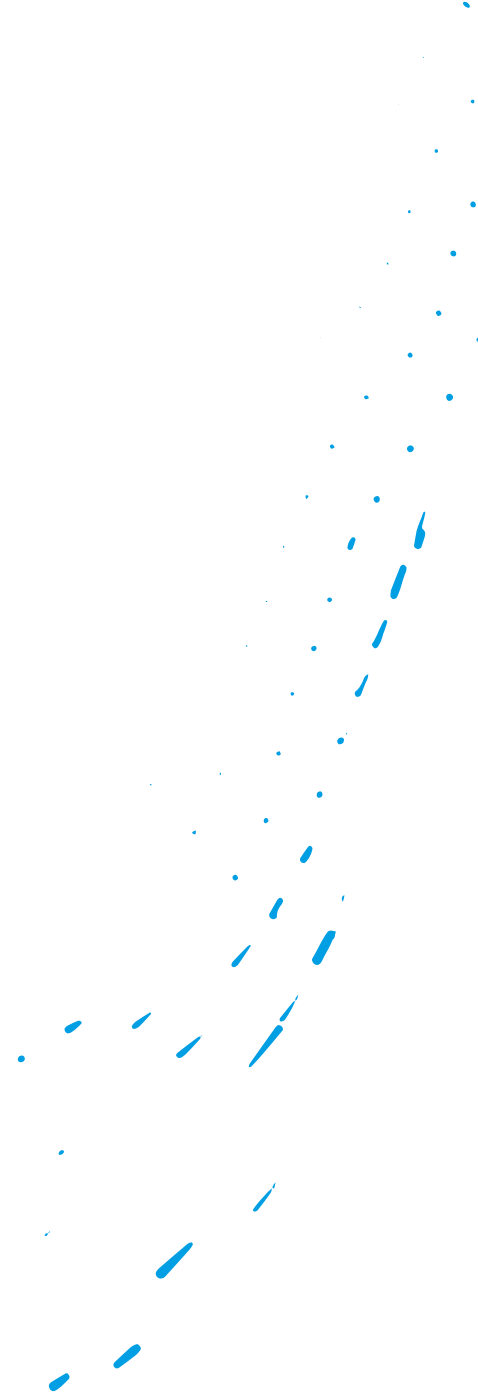
Caring for and repairing the living is necessary for us, as it is through this gesture that we repair and preserve ourselves. In the end, it is not simply a matter of improving the way that we live on Earth, but of recognising that, just as we live on the Earth, the Earth lives in us. We are the Earth, and we are its children and its fruit, just as mushrooms are. To be able to see this, we must reinvent or reactivate the cosmologies that subtend our relation to the living, our place at the heart of this order. We must envisage connective ontologies, cosmologies that generate forms of life that preserve the equilibrium of the living. When we observe certain cosmologies in Africa, in Latin America, in the Amazon, in Oceania, and even in precapitalist and premodern Europe, we realise that enormously many human groups produced visions of the world that established relations between humans and non-humans founded upon the idea of the unity of the living. These non-separatist cosmologies established a continuum between communities of beings, and made no clear distinction between humans, plants, and animals. Moreover, in these visions human beings are not the sole possessors of reflective consciousness, intentionality, affective life, or sociality. The collectives of animal beings, vegetable beings, and human beings share our attributes of social life, knowledge, reciprocity, and even ethics. Human interactions with the other communities of the living are certainly conceived under the sign of utility, but they are equally conceived under the sign of affinity, cooperation, and interdependence. The hierarchies placing our own humanity above all other forms of life are overturned, implying other kinds of relationality, lateral and vertical. These cosmologies postulate a bond of continuity between individual bodies, social bodies, and ecosystems, and this implies that damage to an ecosystem or to the environment also affects social bonds and vice versa. The questions of the social bond, of the political bond, and of the environmental bond call on us to consider them and think them through simultaneously.

I think that one of the relations requiring urgent rearticulation with our ecology has to do with the movement of the economy. The economy – modern, contemporary, dominant – is principally an extractive one, accelerating the entropy of the living, and one whose metabolism negatively affects the biosphere. The processes that

defer the entropy of life, that regenerate life, that keep it alive, are known as negentropic processes. The question is how are we to produce social, cultural, and economic gestures that are negentropic. Furthermore, the modern economy is currently experiencing a crisis in its aims. It has promised well-being, prosperity, and dignified conditions of life to a majority of individuals, but it fails to fulfil this mission. Rather, the present economy deprives the majority of individuals of a dignified life. The urgent matter is therefore to promote an economy whose rhythms of production would be in harmony with the regenerative rhythm of the biotope. An economy of the living, a relational economy, an economy reinserted within social cultures, an economy whose metabolism positively affects the orders of the social, the environmental, and the relational. An economy that is not exclusively anthropocentric, which is no longer exclusively focused on responding to the needs of human communities, but which must maintain relations of mutual growth with all types of order that exist. These would constitute a much more responsible rapport, taking into account a complex system of interdependence. Such relational and symbiotic economic practices already exist in many places in the world. They exist in Senegal, for instance in Ndem; in Cameroon and Togo; in Latin America. They exist in the spaces that get called spaces of the informal economy, where human groups find ways of setting the economy within their cultural, social, ecological environment in a harmonious fashion. They exist in the West as well – in the circuits of agroecology, in short economic circuits, circuits of degrowth, regional economic circuits – but they do not form a system. The idea is not to replace the dominant economic system with an opposed, sprawling one, but to allow for a plurality of relations to the economy, a plurality of economicities. The question here is how to accommodate such a plurality of economic relationships in a gesture that takes care of the living and repairs the living.

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Felwine Sarr (Senegal) is a writer, musician, editor and economist at Duke University in Durham (USA). He is the author of *Afrotopia* and co-author (with Bénédicte Savoy) of *Restituer*. With Achille Mbembe, he founded the *Ateliers de la Pensée* in Senegal. *Habiter la terre* was the keynote speech for the TURN2 Lab#2 in Dakar.

Heads Do Not Change the World, Hearts Do

The Power of Relation

by Eric Otieno Sumba

Having attended the first TURN2 Lab in Nairobi in November 2022, the invitation to participate in the second Lab in Dakar, Senegal as a critical friend was a thrilling prospect. Since it was organized as a road trip along the Atlantic coast, attending this Lab in Dakar was a beautiful introduction to the rich tapestry of Senegal's socio-cultural and geographical landscapes and provided profound insights into the transformative potential of relational structures, as well as the ambiguities of harnessing that potential for positive change in various regional and socio-cultural contexts.

Throughout the workshop, participants were hosted by various urban and rural communities, from the dynamic neighborhood of Ouakam in Dakar, to the vibrant village of Ndem¹, the Muslim commune in Mbacké Kadior² and the seaside region of Gandiol³. Participants engaged in thought-provoking discussions and immersive experiences that challenged their perspectives and deepened their understanding of the intricate interplay between tradition, innovation, and societal change, as well as the role of art and culture in creating and sustaining relations.

After introductory sessions at the host institution KENU – Lab'Oratoire des Imaginaires, participants explored how the adjacent neighborhood of Ouakam bridged rural and urban dynamics. Here, oral traditions served as a gateway to the past, where paganism, animism, and Islam coexisted, shaping the community's cultural fabric to this day. For instance, one stop during a neighborhood walk was at a mosque that was built right next to the oldest Baobab tree in the area. Baobabs are considered sacred by the Lebou community, while mosques are equally important to this muslim community. The correlation between traditional spiritual beliefs and Islam was palpable. This fusion was exemplified by the Lebou community, which is itself a centuries old conglomeration of ethnic communities. Considered the guardians of tradition and some of the earliest

inhabitants of what is now Dakar, the Lebou's customs have shaped Ouakam's identity to this day.

Central to the workshop's discussions was the exploration of relational structures and societal change. The Lebou community's social organization provided insights into the dynamics of power, family structures, and religious influences. We learned that Lebou society operated on two levels: the familial and the traditional, with the father's sister and the mother's brother assuming crucial roles in matchmaking and preserving familial traditions. Additionally, the presence of Marabouts and Imams underscored the coexistence of Islamic teachings with traditional cultural practices, emphasizing the interconnectedness of religion and community advancement.

As our discussions unfolded across multiple languages with the help of a polyglot translator, we encountered both challenges and opportunities. While the workshop fostered an environment of inclusivity and open dialogue, participants noted the absence of women's voices on the podium about Lebou society, highlighting the need for gender parity and representation in the public sphere. Furthermore, while the importance of reconciling tradition with modernity was generally acknowledged throughout, the need to dispel artificial dichotomies between them became evident, as the categories "modernity" and "tradition" were used in a way that (inaccurately) suggested that everything western was modern, while everything African was traditional. Social, cultural and religious categories were also very porous and interchangeable in a way that created some ambiguity.

The first stop on the road trip was the eco-village of Ndem, which represented a testament to the power of collaboration and collective action. Ndem's manufacturing initiatives encompassed various artistic and artisanal trades, ranging from metalwork and weaving to farming

and food processing. The group witnessed the intricate craftsmanship and dedication of several individuals, whose skills were showcased in an exhibition hall, where most of the products could also be bought. The village's commitment to sustainable practices was evident in their solar-powered moringa production and food processing unit, demonstrating the relationship between environmental preservation and economic empowerment. It stood out that the village participated in various agricultural and economic activities in a region that presented very few ready-made opportunities to do so. In that sense, the village demonstrated ingenuity and self-determination built on a communal notion of self-sufficiency. There were strong echoes of these guiding elements in Mbacke Kadior, which was established based on the model in Ndem. Despite the very impressive economic activities in Ndem and Mbacké Kadior, participants questioned their dependence on western markets, and the villages supply-chain integration into the global economy via the sale of its products internationally, fracturing the framing of these villages as self sufficient circular economies.

Nevertheless, through immersive experiences and engaging discussions, participants witnessed the transformative power of embedded social relationships in shaping communities, fostering cultural resilience, and promoting social change. The community in Mbacké Kadior showcased the strength of collaboration and sustainable practices, while both of the Hahatay sites in Gandiol provided a window into the harmonious convergence of creativity, upcycling, upskilling in the architecture that made use of local construction practices and materials to create distinctly modern spaces and structures.

Generally, the TURN2 Lab Dakar offered a glimpse into the transformative potential of relational structures and instilled a sense of responsibility to effect change within institutions and communities. The transformation was evidenced by the built environment and the social structure of the village that were contingent upon a small scale-social contract, or a commitment to the ideas underlying the economic activities that the communities we visited were engaged in. The immersive and enlightening workshop deepened the participants' understanding of the interplay between communities, cultural practices, and societal transformation. It was a reminder of the power of collaboration, the importance of preserving cultural heritage, and the need for inclusive and equitable relational structures. Armed with these insights, participants embarked on a journey towards a more just and interconnected world. As the group heard in Ndem, "heads do not change the world, hearts do".

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Eric Otieno Sumba is a social theorist, political economist, art critic and writer from Kenya, based in Germany. He is an editor (Publication Practices) at Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW) in Berlin. He participated in the TURN2 Lab#2 Dakar as a *critical friend* to observe and reflect on the exchanges during the Lab.

“It’s about Connecting Geographies, People and Ideas”

Aïcha Diallo in conversation with Anne Fleckstein

Anne Fleckstein: Aïcha you are a Berlin-based cultural analyst, curator, writer, editor, and educator also working in Dakar. Do you remember what was in your mind when you arrived there in order to participate in TURN2 Lab in late March 2023?

Aïcha Diallo: The theme of this Lab was *Relationalities*, *L’art de la liaison* in French. Just to give a telling example: When we participants arrived at the airport, the organisers came to welcome us right at the door of our plane. Senegal is known for the Tëranga culture as a mode of hospitality. This gesture really had an immediate effect on me. As we set foot on Dakarois soil, this already opened my mind and heart by immersing myself into this unique relational process.

AF: How did you perceive your participation in the TURN2 Lab in Dakar and your connection to the theme *JOKKO – Relationalities*?

AD: The TURN2 Lab Dakar was a great opportunity to create a cross-cultural collaborative space. I find the idea of KENU as a laboratory of imaginaries very interesting as it is located in the specific area of Ouakam in Dakar. During the inaugural workshop, we participated in a powerful guided walk that let us immerse into the context of Ouakam. For example, I was truly fascinated by the stories told by representatives of the Lébou populations there. During both the colonial and postcolonial period, they endured land dispossessions and unsettlement. Though, by their own use of spiritual

technology and sense of agency, they’ve been able to maintain a significant political position in terms of governing decisions over structural development in Ouakam and the city. The walk was quite eye-opening for me. At that point, I could get a glimpse of how this neighbourhood functions through a system of “relationalities”. AbdouMaliq Simone speaks of “people of infrastructure”¹, I find this term very suitable as this concept emphasises the creative ways in which informal social systems build a network using communal practices. The people shape their own dynamic and resilient system of community.

AF: What is your PhD about?

AD: In my practice-led PhD I explore the modes in which urban residents, artists and cultural producers in Berlin and Dakar inhabit, relate to each other, and re/appropriate the city through the lens of memory, space, and power. Cities act as hosts of collective memories mirroring their inhabitants’ narratives, experiences, and cultural heritage. I’m interested in the cultural and political practices produced by people of African descent in and between those two contexts. In our postcolonial moment, the questions of remembrance, aesthetic practices, and politics are all intertwined and thus reveal the existing urban inequalities. There are indeed different ways of knowing and understanding the world. Though, my idea is not about comparing those two cities, but more about delving into the concept and practices of planetary entanglements and the constant flow between people, ideas, practices, and resources.

With this in mind, I ask myself: How do we imagine ourselves? How do we create and project images and thus old and new perspectives onto spaces we occupy and move in?

AF: The curators of the TURN2 Lab Dakar planned a joint road trip for all participants. How did you experience this with regard to connecting with other people?

AD: I was excited about the road trip, having a collective journey together. It was really an experiment. We were together on that bus stepping onto a common route and getting to know each other. Something happened during that road trip reflecting the idea of connecting. So, how do we connect like *JOKKO – L’art de la liaison*² and how do we create our own way of being, working together, creating social spaces, and generating new possibilities in a way? The French word *liaison* fits perfectly. Additionally, the German verb *weben* in the sense of *mending* and *repairing* comes in. The social and cultural fabric is a texture which you weave in different elements of knowing and being, also in terms of solidarity.

Besides, we also experienced a relational process about not only how we set up the workshops, who would translate, who would moderate, but also sharing meals and time together, as well as our stories. We truly had moments of conviviality.

AF: Is there anything remarkable about the Lab you want to share?

AD: I liked the fact that the Lab was a non-public, a closed group. It gave us the chance to be among each other, to experiment, and not produce a fixed outcome. “Ideating” seems to apply to this kind of process, by coming together and getting some inspiration. It is a space in which you can also have critical moments and in which you have the possibility to learn from each other. I think of bell hooks and what it means to create spaces for critical thinking. The most important thing is criticality: How do we think critically and grow? And in which ways do we acknowledge differences, challenge ourselves, and practice care at the same time? What the Lab did is choosing and bringing together people with different experiences and cultural attachments but sharing the same interests – that was such a crucial process.

AF: One of the discussed topics in Dakar was the role of the diaspora. Does a diaspora community exist? And, if so, how does it weave into a larger community?

AD: I worked for Chimurenga³ in Cape Town, also in the framework of the literary project *Pilgrimages*⁴ inviting 14 writers to African cities and Salvador do Bahia in Brazil. In honour of the World Cup in 2010, the writer Binyavanga Wainana conceived the programme with the powerful idea of introducing African cities to Africans themselves by turning away from the outward, hegemonic gaze. My work with Ntone Edjabe and Chimurenga was formative for me as it truly re-affirmed that all is intertwined – the Diaspora from the US, the Americas, Europe, Asia and the African contexts shaping real and speculative spaces. Stuart Hall speaks of routes that hold us in spaces but not in the same place.⁵ The idea and experiences of the diaspora go beyond a fixed identity-based position. It is not just about a place. It’s about connecting geographies, but also people and ideas. And that’s how you become nomadic. Living in the diaspora we are able to translate from one place to another, from one experience to another.

AF: During the Lab it was argued whether people in the diaspora could play a crucial role in connecting Europe and Africa.

AD: I believe that the role of the diaspora is crucial. The Black African diaspora builds and reinvents transnational connections between different people, places, and spaces as we live in our postcolonial moment. As people, artists and cultural producers from the diaspora we are also in Europe because of what happened through coloniality. It is important to be aware of and to navigate the concept of routes that Stuart Hall proposes. But the diaspora is not a monolithic group either. So it’s important to not essentialize the idea of the African diaspora. And there is also the role of the African diaspora, which is part of the African Union.

AF: What do you think are the most important questions or core aspects in intercontinental collaborations between Europe and Africa?

AD: Speaking of Europe or Germany?

AF: The Foundation’s programmes are mainly focused on Germany, but my question is about Europe since Germany is a country and Africa is a continent, so this cannot be bilateral.

AD: It is important to continue these kinds of dialogues. As you say, it cannot be bilateral, so how do we create relations between one country and many countries and not just many countries in one fixed location – so to speak, but also actively include the diaspora: How do we break down this form of dichotomy? How do we map out those different contexts in terms of power and distribution of resources? Because even in a place like Dakar there are multiple spaces within one space. It is important to find a (new) language for a sort of non-duality allowing space for further conversations and negotiations. Especially with TURN2, the conditions and outcomes seemingly have changed.

AF: What has specifically changed?

AD: To my understanding, it seems that the first chapter of the TURN funding project was mainly addressing formal institutions, more specifically major German institutions collaborating with African practitioners and institutions on the continent. I have perceived some changes with TURN2 in the sense that these allowed smaller initiatives and independent practitioners working with those different contexts to enter a connective space of knowledge production. The conditions to apply for funding seemed to accommodate realistic needs and desires. And going back to the question concerning the diaspora, there have been more people from the diaspora being involved in these projects.

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Unburied

by Uhuru Phalafala

i

A moment of silence
to listen to the good book
(not written in your language):
gather your first born sons
and all adult males
as offerings of your race
to the shrine of modernity

ii

Close your eyes
and witness in the stillness
the hollowing of the stolen,
our gutting and scraping
by a benevolent mission
extracting our spirits
directly out of our bodies
powered by
the sweat of our brow.
The fall from pastoral heaven
into the golden gates of
mercantile hell.
Hollowed be our names

iii

Close your eyes and see
the scattered bones:
Collaterals
of colonial conquest
unburied
Excavated without libation
The living dead
whisper thunderous command
ceremony! ceremony!
Where is the ritual
the song and prayer?
Here, now. Hear us
Here, hear, here, hear

iv

We gravitate toward soil
sink our fingers deep
excavate bone and living flesh
listen to the ground
for our fathers, brothers
husbands and sons
in the heart of dust
damp, and darkness
a directive for Black
pregnant women to eat soil
and keep sons safely buried
in their wombs
away from the tombs of the mines
Maternal instinct to protect
mutilation of Black labor

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Uhuru Phalafala (South Africa) is a senior lecturer at Stellenbosch University. She is the author of *Mine Mine Mine*, a mythopoetic epic on the migrant labour system. She participated at TURN2 Lab#2 in Dakar and TURN2 Lab#3 in Tunis.

“Human Resources Make Things Happen, Not Just Money”

Alibeta and Sanka in conversation with Anne Fleckstein

Anne Fleckstein: For the TURN2 Lab in Dakar KENU proposed to travel, to make a road trip with the participants. How did this idea come up?

Saliou Sarr aka Alibeta: When we just stay in an institution, there's too much distance, there's too much representation. But by travelling together, by travelling between different environments and worlds, we are who we are and we discover people how they really are, how they handle challenges. We found that this road trip could be really interesting for people who want to think together, who want to explore questions together. Because they need to become familiar with each other in a very short period of time. And then the environment, travelling between different environments or worlds have an impact on us, on the discussion that we can have, on how we look at each other, on how we connect.

AF: How did you experience the joint trip?

AL: There was a common will of exploring something out of the box. We didn't know where we were going. That was interesting. I think beautiful things came out of this trip. The encounter with the Lebou community and the visit to Ndem were powerful experiences for me and for a lot of people I discussed with. Certainly, these experiences were complicated. But that was part of it. How are we going to face the complications? How are we going to face agreement and especially disagreement? At the end of a conversation, it was not like: Do we all agree on something? It was like: We disagree on

several questions, but we respect each other.

AF: Was there a specific situation that is still in your mind, Alibeta?

AL: When we arrived at the Ecovillage in Ndem, as a sign of respect, I went onto my knees facing Serigne Babacar Mbow because he is the spiritual master of this Sufi community. In our culture, I give him respect. His son was on his knees, too. So, I cannot come and stand here. When I was going on my knees, Serigne Babacar also went on his knees to welcome me. He was like: “No, I welcome you. You are the guest.” I find this approach very interesting. He welcomed us and talked about love. When I introduced you, Anne, he was very caring. For me, that was the biggest lesson outside of the ideas for us artists, change makers, fighters, that all the ideas that we're producing, the theories need to be embodied, they need to be realised in our way of being. Like Serigne Babacar was enacting it.

AF: Aicha, what was your experience of the TURN2 Lab?

Aicha Demé aka Sanka: Every day at the TURN2 Lab was like playing a virtual reality game. Let me explain. I'm Senegalese and I live in Senegal. I never thought visiting Mbacké Kadior or Ndem was worthwhile. Why did I feel this way? Maybe because I only saw the religious aspect of those places. However, after the TURN2 Lab, I wanted to continue the journey, to discover and reconnect with myself and those I met.

The other thing that struck me was the transformation before, during and after JOKKO. Most of the participants, myself included, came with preconceived ideas, prejudices and a high opinion of themselves. This created a barrier – fear – a difference and a distance between us. But as the workshop progressed, we saw these ideas being deconstructed, links being forged and egos being broken down to make way for curiosity, for a desire to get to know “the other” better and to accept “the other” in his or her differences. In the end, we were all “jokkotized”!

AF: This observation is also linked to the theme of the Dakar Lab JOKKO – *Relationalities: From Theory to Practices*.

AL: The idea of relationality is really in our work. If we observe the crisis of the world, of Africa, there is one issue that always comes up: We don’t know how to connect. We have lost certain connections to ourselves, to the other, and to the environment. Lots of theories have been produced. A lot of people have thought a lot about these questions. A lot of people have written about it, like the ecology movement, like the humanistic movement. But what is lacking is how to make it in practice, on the one hand. But on the other hand, when I come from a *sérère* society, like the Mandinka, they don’t theorise it, but they practise relationality. And I felt there’s a gap between theory and practise. We see people that cannot produce a theory of how they live. They just live their life because they’re born into societies that have a strong community link. They cannot theorise it. I observe it a lot in Bandiagara in Mali. And I’ve seen it in my village, in the region of the Saloum Islands. Some people can explain the organisation of their community, some others can’t. Take the South African Ubuntu philosophy that people are people through other people. Before Mandela put the theory on it, people had been living this for ages, theorising it in their own way and languages.

AF: Something that was very present in a lot of discussions that we had during the lab was different notions of knowledge. What is knowledge, how do we connect through knowledge, how do we create it?

AL: In Wolof, there’s a word, *xam-xam*. Knowledge is like *xam-xam*. *Xam* is “to know”. And the word to “talk” about knowledge is also *xam*. The one *xam* is theoretical, the other *xam* is practical. If you connect both, they express knowledge. So in that sense, for us, knowledge is of course thinking and producing theories. But as long as this production is not embodied again, as long

as it is not incorporated in a body or in a place, it’s not knowledge. So, knowledge exists, it is manifest, it is here.

AF: The title of the Lab contains the word JOKKO. What does JOKKO mean?

AL: JOKKO means “connection” in Wolof. The idea was that this network we created, after the Lab should continue interacting, continues existing, in a way we don’t know. Even if It’s a virtual platform, people exchange ideas, connections, contacts, resources, It’s already a start. For instance, we could organise this kind of JOKKO trips every year, we can have one JOKKO trip to a different place and maybe have a rendez-vous that allows the dynamic to keep going.

At the same time, JOKKO is also the name of our new space in Ouakam. The space itself is a space of connections. People come, gather, do things. We think that it can also serve as a platform for everyone, including these curators and artists that we met on the JOKKO trip during our TURN2 Lab. If they want to come to Dakar, they have a base where they have an office for their work, where they can organise events, where they may exchange ideas or resources, where they can contribute. And of course, all the local entrepreneur-artists that are looking for spaces, they can come and use that JOKKO space in Ouakam as well. We give the space. And all those people can bring something, their knowledge, their contact. People give us something and we continue. That’s the spirit: The JOKKO SPACE is a platform of connection, operation, economy, and production.

AF: Aicha, as an artist and member of KENU, how important is JOKKO to your artistic practice and to KENU?

SK: My artistic approach reflects the relationship between communities and the cosmos (fauna, flora, sky, water, etc.). But above all, it’s about the relationships communities have with each other, their beliefs, their tangible and intangible heritage, and so on. This community-based methodology is the link between my artistic approach and that of KENU. Hence the importance of JOKKO for us. For our artistic approach, JOKKO is a new way of rethinking the notion of community, but also of offering a new vision of living in society without distinctions based on culture, race, nation or geographical origin. A vision where “Man exists through Man and for Man, with the blessing of the cosmos”.

AF: How does this reflect the practice or work of *KENU – laboratory of the imaginary*?

AL: We founded KENU in 2020. We are a collective. The head is maybe seven people, but it's much more. We have a lot of young people, then there are other people that are not basically here physically, but they participate. It is not just artists, also researchers, and we also have some journalists, performers, theatre people, friends in general, all kinds.

KENU means "pillar" in Wolof. Once you make a foundation, you need a strong pillar to hold the house that you're building. Culture is the foundation, but it's also the different pillars that hold the house. The main idea behind KENU is that the revolution or the change has to pass through culture. The process of colonisation within Senegal and other colonised countries had an impact on culture. Our work on decolonization is also to take care of our cultures, to understand our cultures more and to dig more into the imaginaries of our cultures. We are curious about the vision our societies had about the world and the practices and the knowledge that they produce from our own culture. That's why we call the space *KENU – laboratory of the imaginary*. In a laboratory, you have the idea of orality. All this culture passed through orality, like tales, mythology, legends. And all of this work is to create autonomy, decoloniality, and propositions that participate in building a better life together, starting from our neighbourhood.

AF: You've been involved in various international collaborations. How do you experience such projects in general?

AL: One has to follow rules. These are not the rules that we chose. Sometimes we feel like these rules are imposed on us because of the money. And this is where it's getting tricky. Human resources make things happen, not just money. It's the idea, all the knowledge and the capacity, the energies and resources that you put in that make projects happen.

How do we value these resources that people contribute? How do we value them in order to make the relation between project partners and funders more equitable, more balanced. The one who brings in the money should not be the one who decides, because I think those previously mentioned human resources are more valuable than the money.

AF: What is needed most right now for international projects?

AL: If you want to initiate a cooperation project, the framing or the general terms should not be decided by one partner. This wouldn't be a cooperation. Like the Germans, they have their own reality. We can understand this. But they want to collaborate with people that have another reality. How do they integrate that reality? If they are not integrating it, it's not a collaboration. It's just the Germans having an idea, sitting in the office, putting a frame, writing a concept, and they can have the whole good intention of the world. No one is judging their intentions. That's where the challenge begins. Project partners and funders have to discuss, discuss, discuss until they agree on something that everyone feels that their main interests are taken into account. But already the time schedule of such projects does not allow that. Cooperation partners know that they cannot change the contract. But they will find a way to realise what they want and to give you the illusion that you have reached what you want. Instead, discuss, take time, sit down, discuss, create another frame together. Where everyone feels like this frame is great. It's all about frames. And framing needs such a participative process because it's different from feeling that rules or frames are being imposed on me.

AF: And regarding the TURN2 programme: what should we do better next time?

AL: Make the process with this money much easier for everybody. And maybe you can foster space for experiment. That you don't know what is coming out of a project. Maybe it's a total failure, but even failure is going to be a lesson. And from an African perspective, people also need to have a bit more confidence in their knowledge. They should not accept everything for money. We are in a time where I think everybody understands that the relation between north and south could not continue the same way. So we need to open new ways.

Saliou Sarr aka Alibeta is a Senegalese curator, filmmaker, and Social entrepreneur. He is the founder KENU – Lab’Oratoire des Imaginaires in Ouakam. Alibeta was the curator of the TURN2 Lab#2 Dakar.

Aicha Demé aka Sanka (Senegal) is a multidisciplinary artist, performer, project manager, filmmaker and scriptwriter. She is the coordinator of KENU in Dakar. She was part of the organizational team of TURN2 Lab#2.

The History of Humanity Is Different but the Future Will Be the Same

A Cosmo-Poetics of Our Relation to Ourselves, the Other, and the World

by Hamidou Anne

The second TURN2 Lab in Dakar focused on the theme *JOKKO – Relationalities. From Theory to Practices*. This topic is fundamental in view of current social rifts, the emergence of identitarian debates, and the desire to return to a form of inward-looking isolationism that emphasizes belonging to communities rather than to the universality of the human race. Economic and political crises, European anxieties about immigration, and the resurgence in Africa – particularly in French-speaking Africa – of exclusionary nationalism against the backdrop of nationalist demands are all creating a sense of cultural insecurity among people on both sides of the Mediterranean. Faced with these fears, which give rise to mistrust and even hostility towards others, how can we rebuild a community across borders using the tools of the arts, culture, and politics?

How can we live on earth and work together to reduce vulnerability and promote social progress and spiritual growth? How can we connect as a functional community across borders? What concepts can we forge to develop new forms of relationship that do not deny cultural differences but counteract stereotypes that confine and divide? All these concepts were the subject of in-depth and fruitful discussions between the participants at a workshop whose design and inclusiveness allowed for diverse and enriching points of view based on personal experience.

Globalization has been a catalyst for tremendous economic and technological change. But at the same time, forms of individualism linked to the quest for profit and the dilution of social ties have emerged. Despite the economic growth of nations, the way we inhabit the

earth has been transformed. Disembodiment, the loss of a sense of the common good, and a lack of consideration for the links that bind us together as a society – beyond the strict confines of the commodification of human relationships – have been the unfortunate consequences of what we have called progress. We cannot limit the human adventure to satisfying the concerns of *homo economicus*, driven solely by the exploitation of resources without questioning the abstract and vital notions of meaning, value, consideration for others, and what the Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe calls “ascending to humanity”.¹ Far from economic rationality, there should also be a kind of quest for well-being based on linking relational concerns to economic issues. Economics should thus be embedded in a deeper, more encompassing humanist context – one that goes beyond mere individual or national, physical and rational concerns – to get to the heart of existential and moral issues. The Senegalese academic Felwine Sarr, a leading theorist of relationships, urges that any contemporary approach should “place the qualitative relationship between individuals, between man and the environment, at the heart of everything”.²

TURN2 Lab Dakar is a special place for questioning the classical concepts that once governed the world and which have since reached their limits. It’s about inventing – across differences of place, origin, colour and spirituality – a shared desire to bring out alternative narratives that go beyond stereotypical perspectives and hasty judgements about how people live and their way of being. How can we move beyond debilitating colonial passivity for some, historically derived superiority for others, and establish a new aesthetic of relations

connected to new concerns like religious extremism, populism, and ecological threats, the cross-border nature of which requires collective responses?

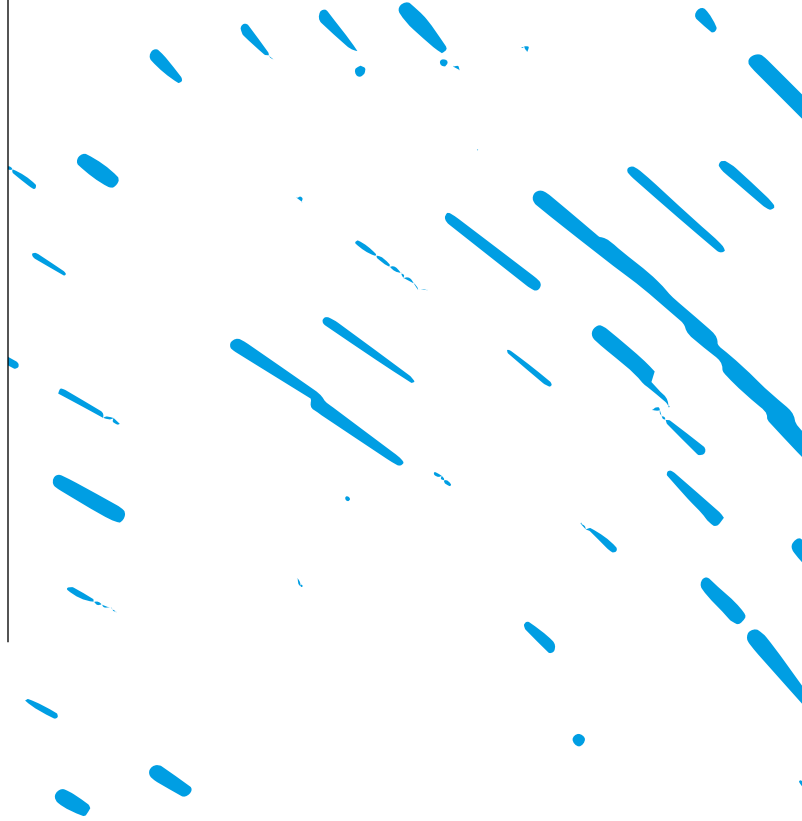
Current challenges bound up with the climate, with ethnic, religious and transnational conflicts, and with colonial legacies and identitarian nationalisms are numerous and complex. From the traditional way of life of the Lebou ethnic group in Ouakam, to the aspirations towards a “slow economy” among the villagers of Ndem, Mbacké Kadior and Gandiol, an itinerant community has tried to lay the foundations for reflecting on an active utopia intended to contribute to the progressive debates currently taking place in Senegal, Germany, Cameroon, and elsewhere where innovative solutions are being developed. These include the promotion of agro-ecological zones in villages, the application of fair-trade rules, the use of the performing arts to offer a second chance to young people excluded from school, and the struggle of young activists against the encroaching desert in the north of Senegal ... All of this makes it possible to think about a new ethics of terrestrial habitability.

It is essential to build a community sheltered from the noise of the world in order to propose an utopia springing from contemporary creativity, decolonial thought, and the visual and plastic arts. The African artists present at the TURN2 Lab in Senegal recalled an obvious fact: Europe is no longer a central point contrasted with the margins, with territories located elsewhere. Africa is at the heart of the world’s spiritual exchanges. The history of humanity is different, but the future – viewed through the prism of political, security and climatic challenges – will be the same. We will all face the same threats, and this means that we need to think and write together about a common future in which we can share solutions to the concerns that affect us as a human community. It also calls on us to question our ecologies and to conceive of a poetics of interrelationship, as well as a new way of collectively inhabiting the Earth, so as to contradict the myth of the clash of civilizations theorized by the American thinker Bernard Lewis (1916–2018) and to bring about a poetics of the encounter.

Through arts that by their nature rebel against the confines of identity and borders, thinkers, activists, playwrights, directors, and authors from Africa and Europe can work together on joint projects and mutually nourish each other to create the future in a symmetrical relationship.

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Hamidou Anne (Senegal) is an author and essayist writing about the interactions between politics, art and culture in Africa. He participated at TURN2 Lab#2 in Dakar as a *critical friend* to observe and reflect on the exchanges during the Lab.

Impressions



“TURN2 Lab is an extremely enriching experience, a meeting, a human exchange as its name (JOKKO) suggests, an experience that links and connects.”

Amy Sow

“Thank you TURN2 and KENU for guiding us through innovative and ambitious projects in Senegal. Those projects intertwined multiple layers: spiritual, cultural, environmental, economic, academic ... and displayed the beauty and strength of communities! I’m very inspired by them as well as by the guests and look forward to initiating collaborations!”

Aouefa Amoussouvi



“Getting to learn about the way of life of communities who place the utmost value on human connection and on living at one with their environment, was living proof that another way is possible. One that is sustainable, inclusive and founded on love.”

Maïmouna Jallow

“The actual interdependencies of persons, cultures, economies, of ecological and artistic entities force us to replace the term of the individual, the undivided atom, by the new term ‘dividual’ or ‘dividuation’ underlining the intermixing of all sorts of entities and helping to move towards a decolonized philosophy of relation.”

Michaela Ott





“It was great to be able to share these days traveling together in this diverse group: visiting initiatives and learning about their circumstances, the ecosystem in which they operate and the challenges they face. The Lebu community, their way of decision making, their social fabric and the way they kept their historical story, was especially inspiring for me.”

Philip Horst



“JOKKO! JOKKO! ‘The collective brain is more efficient than the individual’; or ‘One hand does not tie the Koki’. Relying on precarious communities to formalize their activities through capacity building is always a guarantee of lasting success. And what could be more satisfying than collective success! JOKKO!”

(*Koki is a spicy preparation made from beans and palm oil, steamed in a tied banana leaf.)

Yves Makongo

“The fantastic team around TURN2 Lab Dakar took us on a trip through artistic spaces all around Senegal. Between music performances, architectural walks, weaving sessions, farming lessons and taking breaks under Baobab-trees we learned to celebrate the moment and to combine as a community of the curious: How do we relate to each other, the earth, to poetry and to past and future voices? How may answers unfold?”

Lutz Nitsche





“My experience at TURN2 Lab Dakar was transformational and immersive. I was moved by the immense sense of community at KENU, from all the artists who gave us their time and energy throughout the programme. We had the privilege of visiting the neighborhood in Ouakam, and taking a road trip to Hahatay in Gandiol and spent the night at the eco village of Ndem. The experience at Ndem and Gandiol stayed with me the most. It was incredible to see how the people live in harmony with nature, and have created an entire village that thrives on a sustainable and renewable lifestyle. From the farms to the dye-section, I was impressed with how they converted crushed peanut shells into biofuel! This is then used in the cooking and production processes across the community. What endured for me, was the sense of hospitality, dignity and generosity shown by Alibeta and the entire team who facilitated this programme. I found each of the workshops engaging, interactive and practical. I found it really thoughtful that they had translators for English, French, Wolof and sometimes German! A lot of what I have learned will stay with me and impact my community in Lagos. I am thankful for the beautiful participants I met, who have now become family. The links that bind us together are sacred and they transform our minds and hearts and unite us across the world to transform our continent, Africa.”

Stacey Ravvero

“Tomorrow’s Africa will not be one of economic growth, but one that reinvents the economy to sustain life in all its forms. The practical utopias of Ndeme Meissa, Mbacke Kadior and Gandiol bear witness to the Africa of the future and herald new ways of living.”

Muhammad Ba



TURN2 Lab#3 Tunis

Climate Crisis /Crisis of Imagination

**29–31 May 2023
L'Art Rue**

Could the Climate Crisis also Be a Crisis of Imagination?

by L'Art Rue

Are we deranged? Is Indian writer Amitav Ghosh right or is he exaggerating in asking this question in his book *The Great Derangement*,¹ and in arguing that future generations may well think so? Are we, artists, cultural operators, thinkers, activists and policy makers, living up to our responsibility, or rather constantly showing our imaginative failure in the face of global warming, climate change and the 6th mass extinction? Is it possible to examine and turn around this inability – at the level of art, history and politics – to grasp the scale and violence of climate change? Can we collectively imagine and propose other forms of human existence, a task to which artists and cultural operators are not only called, but could also be uniquely suited? And is it possible to dare imagine what these other forms of existence could have as an impact on our artistic creation and cultural production?

What?

A three-day gathering of curators, artists, thinkers and activists from Africa, the Middle East and Europe who could be putting the cultural and political struggle to save 'the Earth that we are a part of' at the heart of their cultural, intellectual and/or civic practice. Bringing them together and allowing them to engage and exchange for two days in a shared physical space, in a city that is part of the MENA-region and the Mediterranean at the same time. With the aim of creating an informal network of cultural and activist practitioners that consider the above-mentioned struggle common priority for the decade to come. With the objective, not only to share and exchange knowledge and pertinent practices, but to go a step further: commit to trying to develop a common repertoire/cultural capital/body of imaginary practices, works, gatherings that have the ambition, in the years to come, of putting this struggle at the heart of the cultural sectors and civil societies in our respective contexts. What could we plan to do together from this

first meeting onwards, knowing the future is a practice? Let's aim for a call to action(s) coming out of this gathering.

Why?

Because the climate crisis is not on the way; we are in the middle of it. Our countries and regions are being hit right now, and will undoubtedly be hit the hardest in the years to come.

Nevertheless, creating a sense of urgency within our societies remains difficult. Other struggles (social, political) still seem to be much higher on the priority list. That is totally understandable. But could the ecological struggle not be a common struggle that should unite us all? In order for that change to happen, artists, thinkers, activists have a key-role to play. If our hope is for an ecological coalition to emerge in our region, we need an imaginary-ecological avant-garde. It is these people we want to try and bring together in Tunis. The Tunis-gathering should be seen as a starting-point for a long-term commitment. Not as an end-point, and even less as a one-shot event.

Who?

The German Cultural Foundation, L'Art Rue and the Goethe-Institut Tunisia will be hosting this gathering. The objective is not to limit ourselves to an evaluation of what has not been done so far, but to focus on pre-figurations and practices that are being developed on widely different territories, in very contexts and by a variety of practitioners.

References

- 1 Ghosh, Amitav. *The Great Derangement. Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.

The Nature We Have Is the Nature We Are

Towards an Ecological Understanding of Artistic Practice and Scale

by Julien McHardy

It is late May 2023. The jet peels off the runway, the earth falls away below us, and I look at my phone: “Unfortunately, it has become too late to save Arctic summer sea ice...” Scrolling further, I read, “This is now the first major component of the earth system that we are going to lose.” The dark sea readily absorbs heat once the reflective ice cover is lost. The flight attendant shuffles down the aisle: Coffee? With sugar! Dozing off to the engine’s hum, I dream of the naked ocean.

I am joining a small group of artists, curators and researchers from Africa and Europe in Tunis to ponder if the ecological crisis is a crisis of the imagination and, more to the point, what art can do, and less abstract still, what artists and art institutions can do in the face of the ecological crisis. Our host, the artist-led art organisation L’Art Rue, assembled a stellar programme of talks, performances and exhibitions in collaboration with the Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

The irreducible reality of another being

The temporary dance floor sits squarely in the open courtyard of Dar Hussein – an 18th-century inner city palace, once occupied by the French colonial forces, now home to the National Institute of Heritage. It is warm still, and the day’s residual heat mellows the boundaries of self and other. Two fanciful pigeons perch like referees in opposing corners of the stage. Under their watchful eyes, the dancer (Sofiane Ouissi) enters, and the drummer (Jihed Khmiri) picks up a beat. When the dancer extends a graceful hand, one of the birds hops on for the ride. Bound by mutual attention, the

pigeon and dancer find their proper place. One bird replaces the other, keeping balance, unfazed, breaking to the ground like rustling leaves. The dance picks up speed, the bird perches proudly in the crown of the dancer’s hair, and I feel a rush of joy. You can never know, the dancer shares after the performance, what the bird will do. In Kae Tempest’s meditation *On Connection*, I read that the pulse of performers and audiences synchronises during performances, rising and sinking in unison as tension builds and gives. Performing with pigeons invites the dancer and the audience to relate to the irreducible reality of another being, and while the performance ends, this shift in attention remains.

The nature we have is the nature we are

We follow Maria Lucia Cruz Correia in a kind of secular procession from the parking lot to Sejoumi, an urban backwater in Tunis’ southwestern periphery. Plastic litters the forest, the creek and the flamingo-flanked lakefront. Maria’s guided walk is part of The Natural Contract Lab, a collective of artists and environmental lawyers working with local communities to care for forgotten bodies of water. Walking single file towards the lagoon with the pink birds, I feel my heart open. We sit in the shade of the dying trees, eat, and talk of places that are dear to us and that are changing because of global warming. We retrace our steps to the bus, and a waft of fermenting shit from the adjacent sewage plant turns my vision inwards to the interior landscapes of our bodies, speckled with microplastics like the forest floor underfoot. When I watch pigeons



Two perfect eggs on the shore of Sebkhja Sejoumi. Shoes and image by the author. 31 Mai 2023, Sebkhja Sejoumi.

dance or walk the littered forest, a truth settles in that is easy to know but hard to feel: the nature we have is the nature we are.

Like hope among driftwood and debris

By Sejoumi's shore, we spot two perfect eggs among driftwood and debris. Looking at a snapshot of the optimistic nest, I think that many of the artist-led initiatives at our gathering practice art to nurture life under challenging or hostile conditions.

For Michael Disanka, who runs the Congolese Collective d'Art-d'Art in Mbanza-Ngungu with Christiana Tabaro, performance is "an exercise in truth saying and doing." He shared turning to the "stuttering boy within when there is war; when polluting companies buy the

forest for carbon credit; when it comes to preserving life [...]." Tareq Khalaf positioned the artistic and agricultural practices of the Palestinian collective Sakiya as "an experiment in world-making" set against the ongoing militarisation of the land. Faustin Linyekula, calling in from Brussels, introduced performance art and community-driven food forestry as inseparable parts of Studios Kabako's chore-ography, which is not a metaphor but a way of saying that occupying space for artistic practice and liveable futures is part of the same movement. For our host, L'Art Rue, similarly long-term involvement in the politics of phosphate extraction and water in Tunisia is inseparable from their artistic commitments. Perhaps because of this concern with preserving life, the question of where art ends and other practices of survival begin never came up. In Tunis, Timothy Morton's proposal that "all art is ecological" because it brings us in touch with the web of life, was no provocation but common ground.¹

Uhuru Phalafala reminds us that the end of the world isn't news because "racial capitalism ended and continues to end the world over and over again for large parts of the global population." Phalafala points out that "the making of ecological catastrophe through extraction historically has been inextricably tied to the making of race and gender through extractive violence."² Alongside Phalafala, Morton and many others, I prefer ecological crisis over climate change because it acknowledges the extent to which historically rooted, destructive extraction patterns undermine the ecology of life on this planet. Given their postcolonial conditions, the artist-led initiatives introduced above are without question closer to intimately knowing the end of the world than the established palaces of culture in the so-called Global North, which are still struggling to come to terms with their colonial heritage and the quasi-feudal, gendered power structures that miraculously thrive in outwardly progressive cultural institutions. The art world might celebrate decolonial and ecological projects. Yet, spinning on project funding, extractive markets and the grind of festivals and biennials, it remains ill-adapted to nurture the ongoing work and commitment it takes to manifest lived alternatives to destructive practices of extraction and production.

Towards an ecological understanding of scale

Our gathering rejected the question of what art *can* do for a more pressing, less abstract concern with how institutions might support the work artists *do* do in the face of the unfolding ecological crisis.

I offer the notion of "scaling small" from my work in scholar-led publishing because an ecological understanding of scale can help to nurture, connect and empower disparate artistic struggles. I have run Mattering Press with a group of volunteer editors since 2012.³ Unlike most commercial publishers, our books are available as free digital and low-cost print editions. And we are deliberately small, with no ambition to mistake increased output for growth. Four years ago, we met with a group of similar-minded publishers to discuss how to

support each other's work. Since then, we collectively secured major grants, founded an association of scholar-led presses, built community-owned digital infrastructure that enables small publishers to archive and distribute their books and established a collective funding platform and library alliance that allows institutions to structurally support small presses. Alongside this *practical* work, we *theorise* what we do as part of ongoing struggles against the commercial enclosure of knowledge commons.

When my publishing allies Janneke Adema and Sam Moore coined the notion of scaling small, they created a conceptual tool that cuts through the false dilemma between small initiatives and the demand to scale for impact, reach or fame.⁴ Scaling small proposes building community-owned infrastructures and resources: shared root systems for ecosystems that grow through the labour of diverse interconnected initiatives, each with their own places, concerns, and commitments. Such an ecological understanding of scale materialises an alternative to imperial fantasies of scaling up while acknowledging the need for interconnected action. Scaling small goes some way in addressing the question of how institutions might support artist-led initiatives at scale.

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- 3 Mattering Press, <https://matteringpress.org>.
- 4 Adema, Janneke and Sam Moore. "Scaling Small; Or How to Envision New Relationalities for Knowledge Production", *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, 16, no. 1 (2021), pp. 27–45. <https://doi.org/10.16997/wpcc.918>.

Julien McHardy (Germany/Netherlands) is a designer, dramaturge, curator, researcher and para-academic working on alternative learning spaces, publishing and climate change. He participated in the TURN2 Lab#3 Tunis as a *critical friend* to observe and reflect on the exchanges during the Lab.

“How Can We Imagine Alternatives that Shape New Thinking?”

Bilel El Mekki in conversation with Anne Fleckstein

Anne Fleckstein: For the TURN2 Lab#3 in Tunis, you, the curators of L'Art Rue, have chosen a rather large question: Could the climate crisis also be a crisis of the imaginary? What exactly were L'Art Rue's initial considerations in determining this question?

Bilel El-Mekki: Our objective was to make it possible for the different participants from different territories to be able to be present and discuss and exchange together around their practices. And when we say practices from different disciplines, it might be cultural, artistic, social or scientific practices. This transversality is part of our vision and the way we work at L'Art Rue. We wanted to create a connection platform.

AF: You attended the second Lab in Dakar and you organized our last Lab in Tunis. In general, what can you expect of a three day workshop with 30 people? What can happen there and what can't?

BE: In the programme of the TURN2 Labs I see the opportunity to create conversations. Being part of the Lab in Senegal for me was life-changing in the sense that it was also a movement towards the continent from which I come. And it was interesting to see and experience other people's practices. This second Lab in Dakar created mesmerizing and completely amazing connections. During such labs you meet people, you get to know the context of people, you understand their energy, you know how to ask them questions, you know

what are the limits where you can go and to connect with them or not. Such a direct connection with people is really important to facilitate initiatives and partnerships. This is actually the power I see in such encounters. This interplay of having working sessions, but also spending time together is really important.

AF: How exactly did the question that was at the heart of the TURN2 Lab in Tunis emerge – is climate crisis a crisis of the imaginary?

BE: We were interested in the book of Malcom Ferdinand *Decolonial Ecology. Thinking from the Caribbean World*¹ in his ideas relating ecology to the notion of colonialism. Within his approach, he questions the position of human beings in the world, where they are placing themselves and how they are accessing natural resources in regard to their position in history. How are humans and non-humans related in this *vivre ensemble*, in this living together? How can humans think and imagine a society, a dreamt society where every living creature would find its right or fit rightly in this kind of big *échiquier* (fr: chessboard) or platform that the world is? I mean, these questions are also an integral part of the philosophy of sustainability. This is how climate crisis became a crisis of the imagination or the imaginary during our readings.

AF: We built a translation error into our own communication, as the researcher Sasha Kagan, who participated in the Lab, pointed out: In French, we spoke of the “crise de l'imaginaire”

(crisis of the imaginary) while in English we spelt it out as “crisis of imagination”. Obviously, there is a difference between the imaginary and the imagination and this translation error might point to an interesting confusion. What do you think?

BE: The narratives that we produce are constructing this imaginary that influences and impacts our daily life as well as our connection to the natural resources, to the non human beings on the planet. What are the different narratives and writings that have been produced from the colonial period to the modern days? What are the changes that happened? How can we imagine alternatives, bring up actions and solutions that shape new thinking? These questions are interconnected in my view. Malcom Ferdinand is especially linking the notion of climate fight to other fights, for example decolonialism and feminism. According to him, dealing with climate change is also dealing with other struggles that are interconnected.

AF: Like Ferdinand, Amitav Ghosh in his book *The Great Derangement. Climate Change and the Unthinkable*² contextualizes this crisis not only as a crisis of the imaginary. According to him, climate crisis is also part of the battle against historical injustices, and against a colonial matrix or a colonial power structure in which the transcontinental relations are embedded.

BE: We were discussing the question of mobility in the context of combating climate change, and some artists decided that they would not travel. This was a way to assert their engagement towards reducing their impact on the environment. At the same time, the cross-continental approach, and thus mobility between the continents, is fundamental in order to understand different dynamics and to have a multi-perspective view on important challenges. Is the question of mobility vital? Many say yes, and I would agree. But mobility is also a question of development, of opening up minds and of getting to know other experiences. Also, mobility is a choice that only some can make.

AF: You mean that mobility is a privilege?

BE: Definitely! An artist from Europe who has the possibility to travel can decide to reduce mobility and to create outside of his or her country or not. Whereas in the African continent, mobility is often difficult. For

instance, in preparation of the Tunis Lab a Togolese colleague did not receive a visa, so he was not able to come to Tunis and participate. When some are still struggling to be able to move freely, how can this inequality in mobility be addressed as well as the climate crisis?

AF: L’Art Rue is very experienced in international cooperation. You have collaborated with different institutions and also funders from Europe. For the TURN2 Lab Tunis, you worked together with the Kulturstiftung des Bundes and the Goethe-Institut. For you, what are the benefits and the challenges of these transnational projects?

BE: Besides the aspects of shifting perspectives on common questions, networking and developing future projects together, this kind of cross-continental cooperation also allows us to foster the dialogue with local structures. Challenges involve the administrative rules that come with European money as well as finding efficient ways of communicating together. The participating stakeholders have different objectives. We were intelligent and smart enough to make them converge and to see the connection points. That’s not easy to do, especially because we are working on different projects.

AF: We chose different places for these three Labs, one in East Africa, one in West Africa and one in North Africa. My experience was that in each place people define their role in the trans-continental or inner-African network differently.

BE: Tunisia, as I see it, has the central point that it is at a geographical juncture. I mean, it forms the juncture, the fringe actually, of different territories as well as realities. I see Tunisia as being open to the region and to the world, connecting the continent at least to Europe and to the world, being also a channel where narratives or experiences can travel and go through.

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- 2 Ghosh, Amitav. *The Great Derangement. Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Bilel El Mekki (Tunisia) is a cultural producer and dramaturge at L’Art Rue and the festival Dream City in Tunis. He has worked in film, music and visual arts. He was the co-curator of the TURN2 Lab#3 in Tunis.

Cluster of Matter 2.0

A Solo Exhibition by Bochra Taboubi



Cluster of matter is an exhibition whereby a new narrative around the paleontological heritage of the city of Metlaoui is introduced through drawings, installations and videos. The exhibition presents a reinvented visual index that aims to embody the paleontological richness of the southwest mining basin of Tunisia while capturing the reality of highly exploited yet forgotten land.

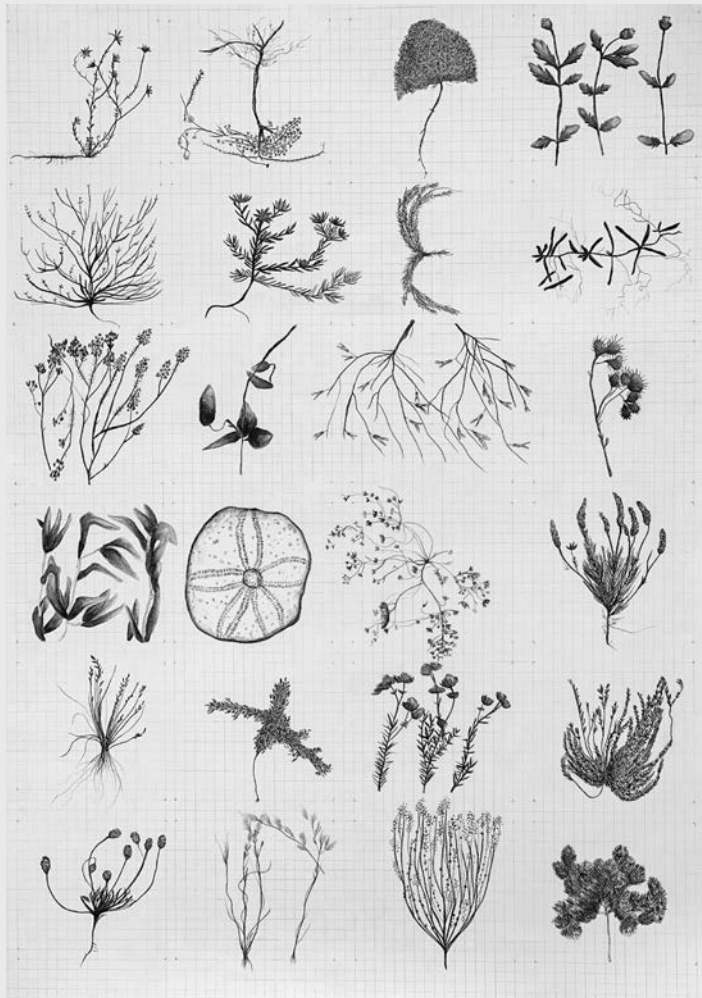
This visual index regroups a register of speculations about the fauna and the flora that could have existed, the cross-sectional layers of sedimentary matter that could have survived and an altered replica of an archive that could have been preserved. The visual speculation about emblematic specimens of the region asserts itself as a way of criticizing the parts of history that were stolen under the cover of colonialism and the pretense of scientific research.

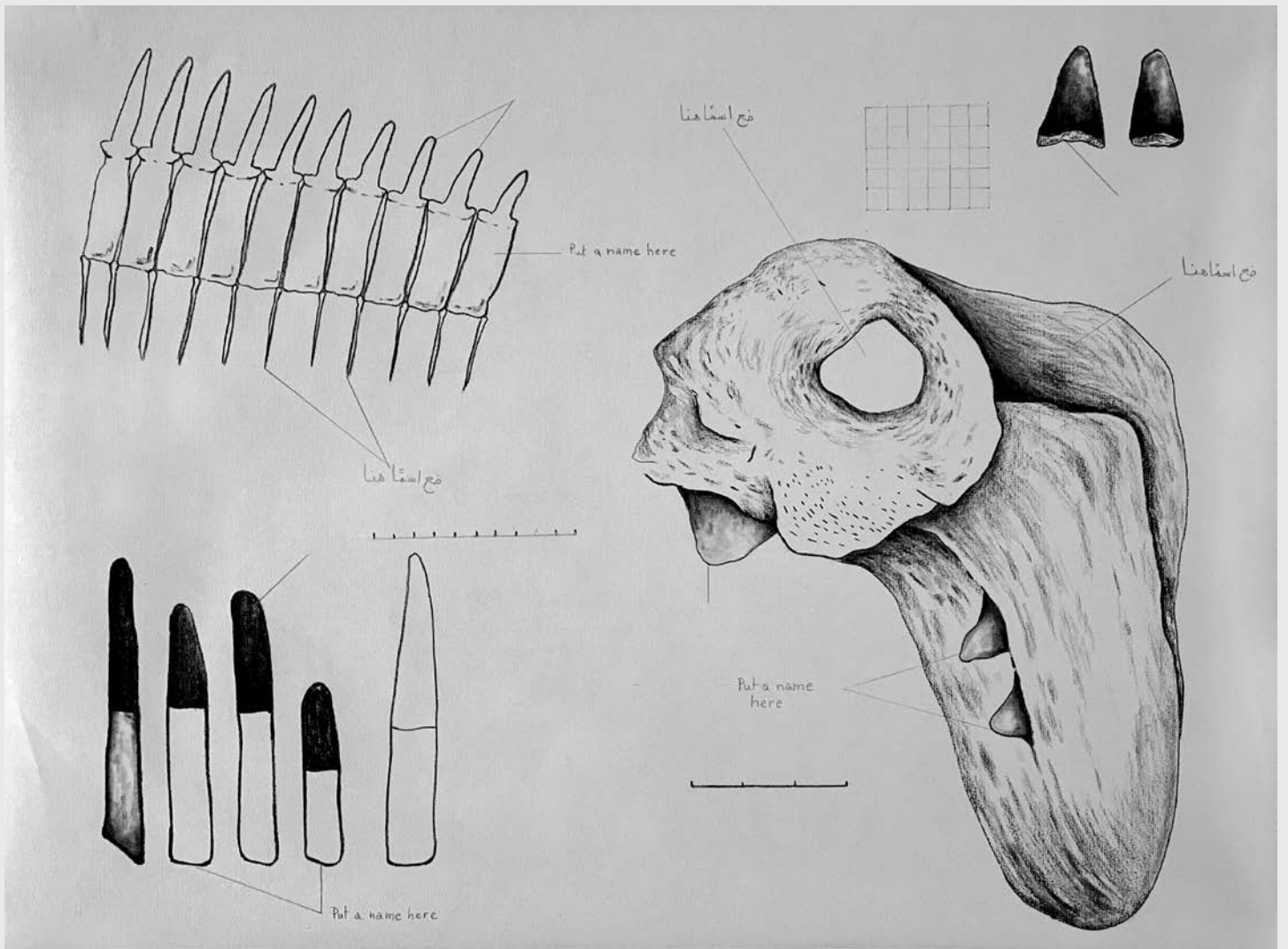
The artistic approach of Bochra Taboubi relies on exploring landscapes, archives and paleontological references to create reimagined phylum of specimens. As the strata of the research came along with the strata of the depictions, the chimerical creatures began to take shape allowing speculative lines to partake in a dialogue aiming to shed the light on an emerging recognition about some buried questions. These lines that intertwine with the past and the present, the historical and the political, the real and the chimerical, the Art and Science, overlap with the lines that could have traced a different story of the territory.

Zeyneb Raissi, Curator of the exhibition

The exhibition *Cluster of Matter 2.0* was presented at Caserne El Attarine, Médina de Tunis, from 27 May to 3 June 2023 and was part of the TURN2 Lab#3 Tunis.









Bohra Taboubi (Tunisia) is a visual artist who lives and works in Tunisia. She is interested in organic forms, biomimicry and the relationship between Human and Nature. Her exhibition *Cluster of Matter 2.0* was shown at TURN2 Lab#3 in Tunisia.

“We Won’t Solve Any Problems without Interdisciplinarity”

Annemie Vanackere in conversation with Anne Fleckstein

Anne Fleckstein: What interested you about the invitation to the TURN2 Lab in Tunis?

Annemie Vanackere: I very rarely go on a trip where the main goal is just reflection and where I have time to reflect on topics like sustainability with people I don’t know yet. After all, this is also a topic we work on with HAU – Hebbel am Ufer. As an international theatre, we have to ask how we can work sustainably. But the solution can’t be to stop travelling or participating in exchanges altogether. That was also one of the reasons I accepted this invitation. For me, the question of whether the climate crisis is a crisis of imagination has nothing to do with artists, but with capitalism. Capitalism leaves little room for imagining “another life” – or else it appropriates it immediately. Artists nevertheless try to resist this.

AF: One of ideas that gave the curatorial team its initial impetus came from Amitav Ghosh’s book *The Great Derangement*,¹ in which he explores the connection between colonialism and climate change and posits that the climate crisis is accompanied by a crisis of artistic engagement with it.

AV: I don’t think that the climate crisis is also a crisis of art or imagination. The problem is rather that we in the West fail to consider that there are completely different ways of living. This is the phenomenon of cognitive dissonance: we know an incredible amount about the climate crisis, we know the facts and the forecasts, and

yet we don’t change our behaviour. I see that as an essential part of the crisis. There are plenty of artists and thinkers who offer us alternatives, but it doesn’t really help. That has less to do with imagination than with the political will to actually implement things.

AF: Do you have the impression that stakeholders from Europe and African countries have very different perspectives on the climate crisis?

AV: Yes, I do. It is important to quantify global warming and to focus on the reduction of CO₂, but it’s not sufficient. It does not go far enough in addressing the West’s historical injustices and colonial crimes as significant factors in the climate crisis. In Europe, there is much more money and many more opportunities, but the climate crisis is markedly more urgent for North African actors. When the water problem in Tunisia was discussed during the Lab, this difference also became very clear amongst our participants. This is why I find this trip and the interdisciplinary approach of the Lab so important and inspiring. We won’t solve any problems without interdisciplinarity. Awatef Mabrouk, a Tunisian activist and sociologist who was at the Lab, told us how she goes to Tunisian villages to talk to women about how they deal with water and to learn from them. What value do they place on water? How do they manage with scarce resources? She arranges small activities where she takes people with her. Other artistic projects, such as the *Natural Contract Lab* by Maria Lucia Cruz Correia, whom I met in Tunis, also relate to local problems. The artists don’t just focus on their own

aesthetics, but become something more like local researchers.

AF: As sponsors of culture, we also naturally think about the sustainability of our programmes. We ask ourselves how we can reduce our mobility and whether we should issue guidelines or recommendations to that effect. On the one hand, as Europeans, our lifestyle and the history of colonisation make us responsible for climate change on the African continent, where its consequences have long since changed people's lives. On the other hand, we want international projects to take our sustainability requirements into account and ensure the least amount of travel possible occurs.

AV: I say to myself: Be careful not to repeat colonial patterns! Actors from the African continent are additionally restricted in their mobility by rigid visa regulations. In our practice at HAU and at *Tanz im August* we've repeatedly faced the situation where objects and stage sets make their way across the German border, but artists aren't let in. There's obviously a huge cynicism involved. It makes events like the TURN2 Lab in Tunis all the more important, where people from different fields come together and exchange ideas on site. In general, the TURN programme in Germany gave us the impulse to look towards the African continent. We made use of it at HAU and organised festivals and projects, like *Return to Sender*. We benefited from the money, which also allowed us to develop longer artistic relationships.

AF: In Tunis, as in the other labs, language played a major role. There were very professional interpreters who translated French, English, and Arabic.

AV: That was great. Arabic speakers were not forced to speak English or French, the colonial languages. The need for translation in all directions is perhaps more evident today than it was ten years ago.

AF: We found that anglophone and franco-phone discourses are often unaware of each other. What do you see as the results of the exchange in Tunis?

AV: It was fantastic that we had such an active exchange. On the last day, we worked in three groups and had to come up with a "Call for Action". I didn't find that an easy task. How can you get beyond general statements like "all people are brothers" – or better: sisters?

The space for discourse could not have been better, the size of the groups was appropriate. Nevertheless, one result was finding out that it's difficult to come up with results.

AF: HAU is a theatre that works internationally. What are you currently particularly focusing on in your collaborations with non-European partners?

AV: We are still convinced that it makes sense to present artists who can give us a different perspective on the world, one that does not (yet) exist in Berlin. So we invite them to come here. To shake us up, if you will – not in an exoticizing way. Since I've been living in Berlin, the city has become more international. So we also work with a lot of artists who live in Berlin but come from other places around the world. We're also interested in developing long-term artistic relationships. Not only for artists and for HAU, but also for the audience. People now know artists who have worked with us several times and are curious about their new productions. We can all go on a creative journey together. And of course, we pay attention to how we arrange our travels. The years of innocence are over. We continue to travel, but preferably with longer stays, not just for a day. Travelling remains important so we can see where artists come from, to better understand and translate their context.

AF: In all three labs, we also repeatedly questioned the role of the African diaspora. Who is Africa? Where is Africa? What meaning does the term "diaspora" have for you at HAU?

AV: We are currently working on just this subject. In spring 2024 there will be a project with the Alliance of International Production Houses at HAU. I find the diaspora so interesting because people are saying, "We're here to stay!" And they challenge the state to think about a diaspora policy – about rights, duties and opportunities for diasporic people to participate. If it doesn't do that, it loses a lot! At HAU, we've noticed that, thanks to the diaspora, different artistic languages and perspectives are much more visible in the city than they were many years ago. That's a huge gain! But it's also the reason why the need to invite artists from far away has changed.

AF: Some participants in Dakar understand themselves explicitly as diasporic. They observe that they often take on a specific role, connecting places because they travel a lot. However, this intermediary function is also expected of them, which can definitely be a problem.

AV: I would not want to expect diasporic artists to represent their country. That's why I've become more sceptical about the term "international". After all, it has "national" in it. But we don't work with countries or nations, we work with people. That's why I like to use the term "translocality". We are always "local" somewhere, and many people are local in several places. Most people can't participate in globalisation – for example, by enjoying increased mobility. Inequalities between the global North and South continue to grow. Against this background, we should rethink what we want to achieve with our "international" or translocal cooperation. We can only tackle challenges together.

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Annemie Vanackere (Belgium/Germany) is a festival and theatre director. She has been the artistic and managing director of the international production house HAU Hebbel am Ufer in Berlin since 2012. She was a participant of the TURN2 Lab#3 in Tunis.

2084: A Dystopian Vision of the Climate Crisis

by Marwa Gouader

Let's imagine that it's 2084...!

Yes. 2084, a century after George Orwell's dark predictions in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Except that in this dystopian future, the climate crisis will have come to a head, bringing about major changes in the life of human beings on Earth. Like Orwell's novel, the imagined reality of 2084 presents shocking facts that seem far away, but which could very well turn out to be the everyday life future generations will have to endure in just sixty years' time ... That is, if we don't act now! Statistics point to the urgency of the situation and the necessity of acting rapidly. According to scientists, emissions of greenhouse gasses must be cut by at least 50% by 2030 to avoid having a catastrophic effect on the climate. The melting of glaciers and ice caps is accelerating, raising sea levels and threatening coastal populations.

What can we do? How can we encourage people to act? What must we imagine – or not – to that end? These questions were at the centre of the TURN2 Lab in Tunis, which took place at Dar Bach Hamba, home to the association L'Art Rue in the Medina district. Is the climate crisis a crisis of imagination? Perhaps, instead of creating new images, we could make use of those that already exist.

Let's take a moment to return to George Orwell's classic *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, a work significantly less well known in Tunisia than in Germany. The book portrays a dystopian, totalitarian future. This nightmare vision of the world aims, among other things, to remind us of the disastrous consequences that could result from persisting in certain current practices. The novel warns about the manipulation of information, the destruction of individual liberty and the loss of a private sphere in an authoritarian society. What's more, it warns of the importance of resisting propaganda and censorship, encouraging readers to remain vigilant and fight against every form of tyranny to preserve their human dignity.

Transposed into the Tunisian context, Orwell's novel encourages a profound reflection on current, similar challenges relating to the climate crisis. Indeed, Tunisia today, like many African countries, faces challenges related to environmental misinformation, where prevailing economic interests cloud the way that climate issues are perceived and addressed. Coupled with pervasive control of both information and activities relating to the environment, this general framework serves to hinder public mobilization and initiatives aimed at mitigating the effects of the climate crisis. Orwell's story hence resonates with the realities in Tunisia through its complex themes, which call for immediate attention and collective action.

Taking Orwell's novel as a starting point, let's imagine what a story would look like that deals hyperbolically with the future of the climate in the Tunisian context in 2084. We can envisage a situation where the consequences of climate change have reached a disturbing turning point. Extreme heat waves and water shortages threaten the lives of citizens. The authorities, seeking to maintain a semblance of order, would impose strict control over the population, taking advantage of dangerously intrusive and sophisticated new technologies. The scarcity of essential natural resources would lead to conflicts, causing famines and massive population displacements. Biodiversity would decline, and marine resources, once abundant, would be severely affected. Each day would present an interminable struggle in a hostile environment, accentuated by powerlessness and oppression.

Faced with this reality in 2084, it would become imperative to resist the forces that downplay climate change and seek to manipulate information. Advocating collective and individual action would be essential to combat the devastating consequences of climate change, while at the same time preserving democracy and quality of life in Tunisia. This would give birth to a citizens'

movement, made up of people determined to do everything in their power to mitigate the effects of this growing crisis. They would unite with determination, putting pressure on decision-makers, advocating climate justice and mobilizing the masses to demand radical change. The crucial question remains: would the 2084 movement succeed in turning the tide? The answer lies in our hands. It is through our actions today that we will write the rest of this story.

Perhaps 2084 will resemble Orwell's imaginary 1984. But while our imaginations might transport us into an uncertain future, real-world references and figures remind us there is still time to act. Examples of success prove it is still possible to bring about major change. The report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stresses that if bold measures are taken, it is still possible to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The grim climatic projections just mentioned are hence echoed today in Tunisia and Africa in general. Faced with these challenges, a glimmer of hope is emerging in the form of initiatives and movements that have taken root across the continent. These nascent environmental initiatives are a reminder that solutions do exist, and that collective awareness can influence the course of events.

Indeed, on 25 May 2022, the United Nations Development Programme, in partnership with the Tunisian Ministries of the Environment and of Public Works and Housing, launched a major initiative aimed at incorporating climate risk management into development and land-use planning in Tunisia. Permaculture is also gaining ground in Tunisia as a promising response to the challenges posed by droughts linked to global warming. This farming method, which focuses on preserving soil moisture by keeping it covered, is gaining in popularity thanks to its low water consumption.

The youth climate movement in Tunisia, inspired by international icons like Greta Thunberg, has grown to a remarkable size, inspiring many young Tunisians. They have mobilized across the country, speaking out for the climate, taking part in demonstrations and demanding immediate action to safeguard their future. Their powerful voices have succeeded in attracting the attention of political leaders and putting environmental issues at the heart of global debates. As a result, Tunisia and Italy have strengthened their cooperation on emergency preparedness to meet the growing threats posed by natural disasters and forest fires, in response to the current challenges posed by climate change. This initiative stems from an initial memorandum of understanding signed in 2013 and was given fresh impetus at a

recent meeting between the Tunisian Minister of the Interior and Italian civil defence representatives.

At the same time, local and community initiatives outside Tunisia have flourished, emphasizing sustainable practices and environmentally-friendly lifestyles. Some cities, notably Copenhagen in Denmark, have adopted ambitious policies to reduce carbon emissions, encourage soft mobility, and promote urban agriculture. Some communities, like Fribourg in Switzerland, have created sharing and circular economy networks, reducing consumption and waste. While these initiatives are ambitious and promising, it is important to recognize that they remain limited in number and often confined to small geographic areas. They are a source of inspiration that represents the beginnings of solid, meaningful change, but which remains fragile and liable to be lost amongst the mass of global environmental challenges. The key to tackling these challenges lies in raising collective awareness and taking decisive action. We need to bring about unprecedented mobilization on an international scale to transform these promising beginnings into a widespread transition towards a sustainable future. By honouring the power of action and resistance, we can forge a future where the climate crisis is a distant memory, and harmony between humanity and nature is restored.

Inspiring initiatives, grassroots movements, and technological solutions to reverse the current climate trajectory do exist. Some promising initiatives have already been launched in Tunisia, proving that a more favourable environmental future is within reach if these efforts continue. Thanks to ever-greater investment in renewable energies, wind and solar farms like the Bizerte wind farm are contributing to the transition to clean energy sources and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Tunisia has significant wind energy potential, particularly in the regions of Nabeul, Bizerte, Kasserine, Tataouine, Medenine and Gabes.

Imagining a dystopia in the year 2084, though gloomy and worrisome at first sight, is a call to action and a warning while we still have time. It reminds us that our power to act together is essential if we are to prevent this hypothetical vision from becoming reality. There is still time to take bold action to combat climate change, protect our planet and preserve a viable future for generations to come.

The choice is to act or to remain silent, wait passively, and let our children suffer. This is the new chapter we all have a responsibility to write.

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Marwa Gouader (Tunisia) is a cultural consultant, translator and author, interested in intercultural relations and managing multicultural artistic projects. She participated in the TURN2 Lab#3 Tunis as a *critical friend* to observe and reflect on the exchanges during the Lab.

Impressions



“Imagination as a way of preservation and observation as a collective awareness. The commons will liberate us through processed tools and achievable ‘utopias’. Speculative thinking and modeling worlds is a form of protesting.

I think the future is about resisting but also protecting the symbiosis between ‘extremophiles’ living matters. We, organic and non-organic matters, live under pressure and extreme conditions so it is all about creating efficient tools for coexisting. We aspire for possible reunification and learning together as all what surrounds us are teachers. Prospecting the narratives is the body of searching by putting one leg in the present and the other in the future and that’s by cherishing possible hybrid ways of making worlds and places where traces of life and emotions exist side by side decreasing the fuss of individualism.”

Bochra Taboubi

“In connecting practices and geographies all over the African continent to Germany, TURN2 Lab Tunis decentered ecological thought and action away from Western perspectives. It re-situated the local-planetary injustices of the multiple socio-ecological crises of the Anthropocene, creating relations towards an urgently needed shift in the ways we work together planetarily.”

Carlina Rossée



“The participants’ various contributions reflect the search for a specific position in the ecosystem as part of an inseparable whole. It was agreed at the end of the lab that valuing planetary resources should precede action: the role of art and culture is no different.”

Hedi Khelil





“I took back with me to Europe two central concepts: ‘grief’ (and the direct experience of how this grief shapes the work and relationships of artists from the African and Arab world) and indigenous knowledge (and what concrete meaning this can have for artistic work).”

Tobias Rausch





“Crisis from the Greek word κρίσις, crisis refers to a judgement – that’s how my first reflection began on the relation between perception and imagination and its relation to the environment. It is in fact a crisis because there is a specific judgement, a sort of discontinuity in our understanding – where some of the wealthiest countries produce instabilities where emergent countries face its consequences. We can then speak about a crisis in pointing out accountability, power struggle, but also the innovative ways to deal with our disconnection from the environment. Imagination serves then as a fulcrum to both better perceive problems in their socio-political aspects to be truly able to create sustainable and innovative solutions.”

Youssef El Idrissi



Participants

TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi

Jumoke Adeyanju (Germany) is an interdisciplinary, multilingual writer, curator and dancer. She was a TURN2 Resident at NCAI in 2022.

Jochen Becker (Germany) works as author, curator and lecturer and is co-founder of metroZones | Center for Urban Affairs and the station urbaner kulturen/nGbK.

Rehema Chachage (Tanzania) is a visual artist currently pursuing a PhD in practice with the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.

Letaru Dralega (Uganda) is a conceptual artist based in Kampala where she co-founded the Afropocene StudioLab co-arts space in 2021.

Chiara Figone (Germany) is a researcher, curator and editor. She is the founder and artistic director of Archive Books.

Abbey IT-A (Ghana) is an artist, curator and writer working as an associate at the Foundation for Contemporary Art – Ghana (FCA-Ghana).

Rose Jepkorir Kiptum (Kenya) is a curator based in Nairobi. She is the project coordinator of C& reading room in Nairobi.

Amina Kadous (Egypt) is a visual artist. Her work tackles concepts of memory and identity.

Wanini Kimemiah (Kenya) is a community-taught, cross-disciplinary visual artist and writer.

In their work, they explore themes such as embodiment, presence and perception of time.

Lutivini Majanja (Kenya) is a writer. Her work has appeared in McSweeney's, New Orleans Review, Jalada and The Elephant among others.

Immy Mali (Uganda) is an artist whose work is an attempt to unpack the complexities and entanglements of memory and existence in Uganda.

Onyis Martin (Kenya) is a multi-disciplinary artist whose work explores the human condition and the global geopolitical interface.

Fadzai Muchemwa (Zimbabwe) is a researcher and curator. She is currently the Curator for Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe.

Luamba Muinga (Angola) is a curator, cultural researcher and an author. He coordinates LabCC – Laboratório de Crítica e Curadoria, an art platform in Angola. He was a TURN2 Resident in Berlin in 2022.

Trevor Mukholi (Uganda) is an independent curator based in Kampala. His curatorial practice is centered around facilitating inclusive and accessible cultural experiences.

Aida Mulokozi (Tanzania) is the Chief Executive Officer of the Dar Centre for Architectural Heritage (DARCH) in Dar Es Salaam.

Angela Muritu (Kenya) is an artist and curator currently working as the assistant curator at the NCAI in Nairobi.

Nadja Ofuatey-Alazard (Germany) is an African-German editor, curator, cultural manager/activist and public intellectual. She works as co-CEO and artistic director of the Black empowerment/advocacy platform EOTO.

Mary Osaretin Omoregie (Nigeria) is curator, poet and researcher with an interest in African feminism and archival representation. She currently works at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos.

Eric Otieno Sumba (Kenya/Germany) is a social theorist, political economist, art critic and writer from Kenya, based in Germany. He is an editor (Publication Practices) at Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW) in Berlin.

Marie Hélène Pereira (Senegal) is a senior curator (Performative Practices) at Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW) in Berlin. Pereira has a strong interest in politics of identity and histories of migration.

Isabel Raabe (Germany) is a curator and cultural producer from Berlin. She is the initiator and co-director of the project Talking Objects – Decolonizing Knowledge.

Saliou Sarr aka Alibeta (Senegal) is a musician, curator, filmmaker, writer and founder of KENU Lab'Oratoire des Imaginaires

in Dakar. He was a TURN2 Resident in Berlin in 2022.

Gabriel Schimmeroth (Germany) is a curator, historian and head of public programming at the Museum am Rothenbaum – Kulturen und Künste der Welt (MARKK) in Hamburg, Germany.

Stefanie Schulte Strathaus (Germany) is the artistic director of Arsenal – Institute for Film and Video Art in Berlin.

Abdelrahiem Shadad (Sudan) is a curator. He is the director of the Downtown Gallery and co-curator for the Regional French Institute in Sudan.

Ifebusola Shotunde (Nigeria) is a photographer, designer and filmmaker, based in Ibadan, Nigeria. In his works, he explores the engagement of people as co-authors of their own histories and audio-visual archives.

Robel Temesgen (Ethiopia) is an artist and a PhD fellow in Artistic Practice at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts. His work focuses on symbiotic relations and the languages around places, people, and spirits.

Dana Whabira (Zimbabwe) is an artist and cultural facilitator. She is the founder of Njelele Art Station, an urban laboratory that focuses on research, experimentation and exchange.

Team

Ayako Bertolli (Kenya) is an anthropologist and designer and the managing director of Nairobi Contemporary Arts Institute.

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Martha Kazungu (Uganda) is a curator and art historian based in Nairobi. She founded Njabala Foundation in 2021 to render visibility for women artists. She is the co-curator of the TURN2 Labs.

Juliane Köber (Germany) is an editorial manager for digital communication and strategy at the Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

Lilli Kobler (Germany) is the former director of the Goethe-Institut Kenya. She is now the director of Goethe-Institut Egypt and the regional director North Africa/Middle East in Cairo.

Ollie Murage (Kenya) is an architect and a project manager. She was the project coordinator of the TURN2 Lab#1, Nairobi.

Lynnet Ngigi (Kenya) is an art project management consultant and exhibition coordinator at NCAI. She has worked for numerous international projects.

Niklas Obermann (Germany/Kenya) is the cultural programmes officer at the Goethe-Institut Kenya.

Rosie Olang' Odhiambo (Kenya) is a writer, artist and curator based in Nairobi. She co-curated the TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi. She previously served as the Head of Programmes at NCAI in Nairobi and is the co-founder of MagicDoor, an experimental imprint.

TURN2 Lab#2 Dakar

Aouefa Amoussouvi (France/Benin) is a biophysicist, historian of science, multidisciplinary researcher, artist and curator based in Berlin.

Hamidou Anne (Senegal) is an author and essayist writing about the interactions between politics, art and culture in Africa.

Muhammad Ba (Senegal) is an economist teaching and researching at University Gaston Berger in Saint Louis, Senegal.

Stephane Ibaaku Bassene aka Ibaaku (Senegal) is a sound poet, multidisciplinary creative, cultural entrepreneur and a founding member of KENU – Lab'Oratoire des Imaginaires in Dakar. He has been active in the Senegalese hip-hop scene since the early 2000s.

Mamadou Dia (Senegal) is the president and founder of Hahatay, an ecosystem of socio-cultural and economic projects in Senegal.

Aïcha Diallo (Germany) is an interdisciplinary scholar, educator, curator, freelance writer, and editor. She is currently a PhD candidate in Urban Studies and Planning at the University of Sheffield (Emerging Urban Inequalities).

Wardah Diallo (Burkina Faso) is a cultural entrepreneur and a founding member of the Ouagadougou contemporary art market.

Ibou Diop (Senegal/Germany) is a curator and literary scholar. He is project coordinator at the Berlin City Museum for the Dekoloniale project for memory culture in the City.

Marie Madeleine Diouf (Senegal) is a fashion designer researching natural dyeing methods. She has her own fashion label NuNu design by DK.

Bilel El Mekki (Tunisia) is a cultural producer and dramaturge at L'Art Rue and the festival Dream City in Tunis. He has worked in film, music and visual arts.

Jal Gal Doulsy (Senegal) is a self-taught artist and fashion-designer. He is a member of KENU in Dakar.

Ōtē Ngando (Cameroon) is a poet and slammer. He founded the artistic and humanitarian association Newland.

Philip Horst (Hamburg) is an artist and researcher. He is co-founder of the artist collective KUNST-rePUBLIK and co-director of the Centre of Art and Urbanistics (ZK/U) in Berlin.

Maimouna Jallow (Gambia/Spain) is a multidisciplinary African feminist artist, story-teller and media consultant, working in film and theatre. She co-founded the Nairobi-based arts and media company Positively African.

Meryem Korun (Germany) is Head of TheMuseumsLab at Museum für Naturkunde Berlin. She specializes in addressing colonialism and power relations in the museum environment.

Yves Makongo (Cameroon) is a curator and project manager at the contemporary art center Doual'art.

Fallou Mbow (Senegal) is part of the Senegalese NGO Maam Samba.

Souleymane Seye Ndiaye (Senegal) is an actor and model. He starred and acted in international movie productions.

Lutz Nitsche (Germany) is in charge of international projects at the Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

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Michaela Ott (Germany) is professor of aesthetic theories and philosophy at the University of Fine Arts in Hamburg.

Uhuru Phalafala (South Africa) is a poet, writer and senior lecturer at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. Her research interests are critical race studies, material cultures, and decoloniality.

Stacey Ravvero (Nigeria) is a multidisciplinary artist and author from Nigeria whose work has been shown internationally.

Felwine Sarr (Senegal) is a writer, musician, editor and economist at Duke University in Durham (USA). With Achille Mbembe, he founded the Ateliers de la Pensée in Senegal.

Aminata Sow (Mauritania) is a visual artist and founder of ArtGallé in Nouakchott. She exhibits in Mauritania and abroad.

Taonga Julia Kaunda-Kaseka (Zambia) is a multidisciplinary curator based in Lusaka. She is the founder and director of Modzi Arts.

Milan Ther (Germany) is a curator and the director of the Kunstverein in Hamburg.

Ina Thiam (Senegal) is a photographer and video artist. Her work revolves around culture, sport and women.

Wanjira Wanjiru (Kenya) is a human rights activist and the co-founder of Mathare Social Justice Centre and founder of Matigari Kids Book Club.

Ralf Wendt (Germany) is a radio and sound artist, educator and curator of art, music and radio art festivals.

Moro Yapha (Gambia) is a radio maker and human rights advocate as well as a founding member of Wearebornfree!, a Radio in Berlin.

Team

Makha Bao Fall (Senegal) is working as a video editor, production manager, fixer and assistant director. He is a member of KENU in Dakar.

Aicha Demé aka Sanka (Senegal) is a multidisciplinary artist, performer, project manager, filmmaker and scriptwriter. She is the coordinator of KENU in Dakar.

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Saliou Sarr aka Alibeta (Senegal) is a musician, curator, filmmaker, writer and founder of KENU Lab'Oratoire des Imaginaires in Dakar.

TURN2 Lab#3 Tunis

Mohamed Amine Hammouda (Tunisia) is a visual artist, scenographer and university teacher at the Institute of Arts and Crafts of Gabès.

Mohsen Bchir (France/Tunisia) is an emerging interdisciplinary Tunisian artist, working primarily with lens based media as his tools to narrate visual stories.

Samie Blasingame (USA/Germany) is a social justice facilitator from the US, based in Berlin. Her research focuses on sustainable food systems and environmental justice.

Sebastian Brünger (Germany) works for the Kulturstiftung des Bundes and develops programmes with a focus on sustainability and climate.

Maria Lucia Cruz Correia (Belgium/Portugal) is an artist with a cross-sectoral and hybrid practice. She is the founder of Urban Action Clinic, an interdisciplinary platform focused on counteracting pollution.

Khayreddine Debaya (Tunisia) is an activist and coordinator at Tunisian League of Human Rights, Gabès and Stop Pollution.

Lamine Diarra (Mali/France) is an actor and director of the theatre company Kumasô and the festival Les Praticables in Bamako.

Michael Disanka (DR Congo) is an actor, director and playwright. He is the co-founder of the Collectif D'ArtD'Art and the Group 50:50.

Youssef El Idrissi (Morocco) is a multidisciplinary artist, activist and cultural engineer, based in Casablanca. He is founder of the organization and cultural space KounAktif Pour les Arts et les Cultures.

Wahid Ferchichi (Tunisia) is Professor of Public Law at the University of Carthage and an environmental policy specialist.

Nadia Ghanem (Egypt) is a filmmaker and cultural manager based in Cairo.

Marwa Gouader (Tunisia) is a cultural consultant, translator and author, interested in intercultural relations and managing multicultural artistic projects.

Guy Gypens (Belgium) is currently Head of Performing Arts at KANAL-Centre Pompidou in Brussels.

Don Handa (Kenya) is curator at the Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute and co-curated the TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi. At NCAI he leads the delivery of exhibitions and programmes.

Sacha Kagan (France/Germany) is a cultural studies researcher at University of Hildesheim and lecturer (PD) at Leuphana University Lüneburg. His research focuses on art, culture, sustainability and queering.

Tareq Khalaf (Palestinian territories) is a design educator, urbanist and design consultant. He is a member of Sakiya in Ein Qiniya/Ramallah, an academy for experimental knowledge production.

Hedi Khelil (Tunisia) is a visual artist and university teacher. He has been conducting research in post-colonial studies and evolving in civil society as a cultural operator since 2016.

Faustin Linyekula (DR Congo) is a dancer, choreographer and storyteller living and working in Kisan-gani. He is founder and artistic director of the Studios Kabako.

Awatef Mabrouk (Tunisia) is a sociologist and specialist in gender and climate change. She works with Natural Contract Lab: Les Gardiens de Sejoumi.

Ala Marzougui (Tunisia) is a coordinator of the Tunisian Water Observatory and an activist for human rights and the right of access to water.

Julien McHardy (Germany/Netherlands) is a designer, dramaturge, curator, researcher and para-academic working on alternative learning spaces, publishing and climate change.

Izabela Anna Moren (Germany) is a German-Polish writer, curator and communications strategist. She is a founding member and creative director of Studio Rizoma in Palermo, Italy where she curates the multi-year programme Between Land and Sea.

Sybill Neumeyer (Germany) is an interdependent artist and post-disciplinary researcher with focus on ecological relations. Through polyphonic (hi)storytelling she examines terrestrial alliances, planetary metabolisms and multi-species atmospheres.

Benjamin Perrot (France/Tunisia) is an architect and artist educator. He is the co-founder of the artist collective El Warcha in Tunis which promotes civic engagement and education and was part of Documenta 15 in 2022.

Uhuru Phalafala (South Africa) is a poet, writer and senior lecturer at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. Her research interests are critical race studies, material cultures, and decoloniality.

Tobias Rausch (Germany) is a theatre director and playwright. He is the founder of the experimental performance collective LUNATIKS (Berlin) and head of the Bürgerbühne Dresden.

Alessandro Rivera Magos (Italy/Tunisia) is an anthropologist, photographer and cultural engineer.

Carlina Rossée (Germany) is curator and PhD researcher at Bauhaus University Weimar. She worked for the Anthropocene project at Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin. Her interests are in collective practices in changing planetary climates.

Lerato Shadi (South Africa/Germany) is a visual and performance artist born in Mahikeng and living in Berlin. Lerato Shadi's work challenges common assumptions to critique Western notions of history and make visible that which is invisible or overlooked.

Bochra Taboubi (Tunisia) is a visual artist who lives and works in Tunis. She is interested in organic forms, biomimicry and the relationship between human and nature.

Annemie Vanackere (Germany) is a festival and theatre director. She has been the artistic and managing director of the international production house HAU Hebbel am Ufer in Berlin since 2012.

Christoph Winkler (Germany) is a choreographer and director of the Christoph Winkler Company. His work covers a wide range of formats and deals with topics both of a very personal nature as well as highly political contributions to current social discourse.

Team

Bilel El Mekki (Tunisia) is a cultural producer and dramaturge at L'Art Rue and the festival Dream City in Tunis. He has worked in film, music and visual arts.

Anne Fleckstein (Germany) is head of the programme TURN2 for Artistic Co-Creation between Germany and African Countries at the Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

Jan Goossens (Belgium) is a festival director and dramaturge. He is the artistic co-director of L'Art Rue and the festival Dream City in Tunis and works for the Brussels 2030 mission of European Capital of Culture.

Clemence Hérault (Tunisia) is a production manager at L'Art Rue Association.

Andrea Jacob (Germany/Tunisia) is the director of the Goethe-Institut Tunisia.

Ghada Jeguirim (Tunisia) is a management and cultural assistant at the Goethe-Institut Tunisia.

Martha Kazungu (Uganda) is a curator and art historian based in Nairobi. She founded Njabala Foundation in 2021 to render visibility for women artists. She is the co-curator of the TURN2 Labs.

Selma and Sofiane Ouissi (Tunisia), a brother and sister duo, are the artistic directors of L'Art Rue as well as dancers, choreographers and exhibition curators from Tunisia. They are also co-founders and artistic directors of the festival Dream City.

TURN2 Labs Team at Kulturstiftung des Bundes

Anne Fleckstein (Germany) is head of the programme TURN2 for Artistic Co-Creation between Germany and African Countries at the Kulturstiftung des Bundes and co-editor of the TURN2 Labs publication.

Marcel Gärtner (Germany) is programme administrator for the TURN2 programme of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

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Martha Kazungu (Uganda) is a curator and art historian based in Nairobi. She founded Njabala Foundation in 2021 to render visibility for women artists. She is the co-curator of the TURN2 Labs and co-editor of the TURN2 Labs publication.

Juliane Köber (Germany) is an editorial manager for digital communication and strategy at the Kulturstiftung des Bundes and is responsible for the public communication of the TURN2 programme.

Pauline Kratzing (Germany) is an intern at Kulturstiftung des Bundes and assisted in the editing of the TURN2 Labs publication.

Luan Thanh Nguyen (Germany) is programme administrator for the TURN2 programme of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes.

Partners

Kulturstiftung des Bundes

The Kulturstiftung des Bundes (Federal Cultural Foundation) in Halle (Saale), Germany, is one of the largest publicly funded cultural foundations in Europe. Since its establishment by the German Federal Government in 2002, it has supported around 4,000 projects in contemporary culture. The main task of the foundation is to promote innovative programmes and projects in an international context. Cultural exchange and cross-border cooperation are at the centre of its funding activities. With its TURN2 – Artistic Cooperation between Germany and African Countries programme, the foundation promotes artistic and cultural projects between Germany and African countries, bringing renowned and emerging artists and art scenes into a sustainable intercontinental exchange.

<https://www.kulturstiftung-des-bundes.de/turn2programme>

Goethe-Institut

Nairobi, Dakar, Tunis

The Goethe-Institut is the globally active cultural institution of the Federal Republic of Germany which advocates for understanding between Germany, Europe and the world. For over 70 years, it has enabled international cultural exchange to take place, promoted access to the German language and supported the unimpeded development of culture and science. More than 150 Goethe-Institutes in 98 countries together with numerous partner institutions form the basis of its global network. The Goethe-Institutes in Nairobi, Dakar and Tunis were cooperation partners of the TURN2 Labs.

<https://www.goethe.de/en/>

NCAI – Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute

Nairobi

Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute (NCAI) is a non-profit visual art space dedicated to the growth and preservation of contemporary art in East Africa. Established in 2020 and opening its doors to the public in January 2022, NCAI aims to build on a legacy of initiatives seeking to tell the stories of the artists and projects that have shaped the region's contemporary art scene. Through exhibitions, the development of an East African art archive, a public programme of talks, artist residencies and a multidisciplinary educational program, it hopes to serve as a hub and resource for the thriving East African art community and as an inspiring cultural space for audiences. In 2022, NCAI was a cooperation partner of the TURN2 Residencies.

<https://www.ncai254.com/>

KENU – Lab’Oratoire des Imaginaires

Dakar

Located in Ouakam, KENU – Lab’Oratoire des Imaginaires is a cultural space created at the beginning of 2020, under the impetus of the artist Alibeta, who has gathered around him a collective made up of several structures. The resource centre is the hub for training, intermediation, production-dissemination and research activities. Rooted in the arts, culture and oral tradition, KENU’s mission is to explore the imagination, social practices and traditional knowledge of Ouakam society. Inspired by action research methods, KENU – Lab’Oratoire uses tools from the social sciences, popular education and the arts to experiment with new ways of working together to produce new forms of collective action to serve the community and reveal the current potential of imaginary worlds.

<https://kenulab.org/>

L’Art Rue

Tunis

The association L’Art Rue is a shared and transversal space in which artists from Tunisia and all around the world converse and interact with citizens, activists and experts about both the city and life of Tunis in the hope of collectively creating, poeticizing and transforming a territory, with the need of fusing city and society together. Deeply rooted in its territory, for the past fifteen years, L’Art Rue has been developing a contextual and multidisciplinary methodology, in constant dialogue with its contemporary context and challenges, that transforms and reinvents collective life through artistic gestures. Through transversal programmes, L’Art Rue develops opportunities for creation, encounters and reflections to exchange on the best practices that emerge, around the challenges of the ecological transition and the role that artists and culture can and should play by involving the younger generation and associating them with thinkers, activists, and art practitioners, to imagine alternatives and come up with actions that will shape cities that are resilient to the impending impacts of climate change. In an era of climate change, are we able to imagine new narratives and reinvent living collectively with humans and non-humans?

<https://lartrue.org/>

Programmes of the TURN2 Labs

TURN2 Lab#1 Nairobi Experiencing Nairobi as Felt Time. The City as Archive

Wednesday, 2nd of November 2022:

Arrival

19:00 Welcome & Tender Talk at Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute (NCAI)

Thursday, 3rd November 2022:

City as archive

09:30 Arrival at McMillan Memorial Library and registration

10:00 Introduction TURN2 Lab#1: *Experiencing Nairobi as Felt Time*, with Ayako Bertolli (NCAI), Anne Fleckstein (Kulturstiftung des Bundes) and Lilli Kobler (Goethe-Institut Kenya), Don Handa, Martha Kazungu and Rosie Olang' (curators of the TURN2 Lab Nairobi)

12:00 Moving towards resonance: *Listening to the city. A sound walk* by Sound of Nairobi, with Brian Muhia, Junniah Wamaitha, Lutivini Majanja and Kamwangi Njue

13:00 Guided tour of the Kenya National Archives

14:15 Lunch at One Off Contemporary Art Gallery, Rosslyn

16:00 Introduction to the Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute

With Ayako Bertolli (director at NCAI) and Don Handa (curator at NCAI)

16:45 Listening to Images: Exhibition *Mwili, Akili na Roho: 10 Figurative Painters from East Africa*, with Angela Muritu (assistant curator at NCAI) Mwili, Akili na Roho: 10 Figurative Painters from East Africa

17:45 Working with Institutional Archives, Archive of Experiences: Martha Kazungu in conversation with Gabriel Schimmeroth

Friday, 4th of November 2022:

The Archive as Document

09:30 Arrival at NCAI & Tender Talk

10:00 Allowance to play: Artistic interventions in the archive, presentations by Rehema Chachage, Chiara Figone, Amina Kadous and Immy Mali

12:00 Lunch at NCAI

13:30 Brief visits with the Kobo Studios artists, Riara Road

14:20 Artist talk with Onyis Martin and Rose Jepkorir

15:00 Snack Break

16:15 Film Programme at Unseen Nairobi, curated by Renée Mboya

17:30 Presentations by Stefanie Schulte Strathaus and Tinashe Mushakavanhu, moderated by Renée Mboya

19:00 Dinner at Circle Art Gallery, Lavington

Saturday, 5th of November 2022:

Socially Engaged Practices

09:45 Arrival & Welcome at MSJC

10:00 Turning to Each other: Participatory and Community Practices at Mathare Social Justice Centre (MSJC), with Mary Njeri Mwangi, Wanjira and John Ngugi, with support from members of the Mathare Social Justice Centre

13:15 Lunch at NCAI

14:30 A Tender Talk, with Rosie Olang', Don Handa and Martha Kazungu

16:00 Departure to hotel or Walk in Karura Forest (optional)

18:00 *Too Early for Birds*, Theatre Show at Jain Bhavan

TURN2 Lab#2 Dakar

JOKKO – Relationalities.

From Theory to Practices

Friday, 24th of March 2023, Dakar:

Ouakam. Deuk Raw, The Lebou city of refuge

- 09:00 Welcome at KENU and Presentation
- 11:00 Wer Kam – Ballad of the imaginary: A guided tour of Ouakam
- 13:00 Lunch break: Hub KENU Penccum Legey
- 15:00 Workshop #1: Imaginaries, territory and links

Group #1: Refuge, Hospitality and Relationships; Group #2: Inhabiting the territory; Group #3: The links that liberate, the links that bind
- 17:00 Pencoo #1: Relationship, at the heart of the socio-political organization Lébou – Monument de la Renaissance (pencoo = round-table)
- 19:30 Collective Ndogou (break of fasting in the month of Ramadan)
- 20:30 Dinner
- 21:00 Soir_Lab'oratoire – open mic text reading / poetry / slam

Saturday, 25th of March 2023,

Ndem and Mbacké Kadior: The Relational Economy in the Village of Ndem

- 07:00 Departure for Ndem
- 10:00 Arrival at Ndem: Welcome and guided tour of the site
- 12:00 Workshop #2: An economy of relations in the territory

Group #1: Re-embed the economic act in the cultural and social; Group #2: Territorial resources, transformation and regeneration; Group #3: Relational Economy: Producing Prosperity, Meaning and Dignity
- 14:00 Lunch break
- 15:30 Departure for Mbacké Kadior
- 16:15 Arrival at Mbacké Kadior: Welcome Serigne Babacar Mbow
- 17:00 Pencoo #2: Relational Economy
- 19:00 Ndogou and dinner (the break of fasting in the month of Ramadan)
- 21:00 Film screening (curated by Fatou Kande Senghor)

Sunday, 26th of March 2023, Gandiol:

Hahatay, A Utopia in Motion

- 07:00 Departure for Gandiol
- 10:00 Arrival and visit of the Center Tabax Nite

Artistic performance: Ibaaku and Doulsy
- 12:00 Hotel check-in and lunch break
- 14:00 Workshop #3: Rebuilding the dignity of communities

Group #1: Who belongs to the community?; Group #2: Producing the common, and administering it collectively; Group #3: Building community with the living and with the dead
- 16:00 Departure for Aminata Cultural Center
- 17:00 Pencoo #3: Building the human
- 19:00 Ndogou and dinner (the break of fasting in the month of Ramadan)
- 21:00 St Louis Night Stroll Option (visit of the museums of Amadou Diaw)

Monday, 27th of March 2023,

Gandiol and Dakar: Debrief and departure for Dakar

- 10:00 General debrief
- 12:00 Brunch
- 13:00 Departure for Dakar

TURN2 Lab#3 Tunis

Climate Crisis / Crisis of Imagination

Monday, 29th of May 2023

- 10:00 Meeting at L'Art Rue (Dar Bach Hamba)
- 10:30 Word of welcome: L'Art Rue and Kulturstiftung des Bundes
- Participant introduction TURN2 Lab#3
- 12:00 Introduction to the legal and environmental context in Tunisia:
- Wahid Ferchichi, associate professor of public law, Université de Carthage
- 12:30 Presentation of initiatives and projects in Tunisia:
- Bochra Taboubi, artist, *Cluster of Matter*
- Khayreddine Debaya, environmental activist, *Stop pollution_Golf de Gabes*
- Awatef Mabrouk, gender and climate change specialist
- 14:00 Lunch at L'Art Rue
- 15:00 Is the climate crisis also a crisis of imagination?
- Panel 1 and open discussion with:
- Guy Gypens, director of performing arts at KANAL, Belgium
- Ala Marzougui, activist & coordinator of the Water Observatory in Tunis
- Tobias Rauch, playwright and theatre director Staatsschauspiel Dresden
- Mohamed Amine Hamouda, visual artist, project Raghata, Tunisia
- 17:00 Coffee break and free time
- 19:30 Meeting at L'Art Rue and departure to Dar Hussein, Medina of Tunis

20:00 Dance performance *Bird*, by Selma and Sofiane Ouissi at Dar Hussein, National Institute of Heritage

21:00 Dinner at L'Art Rue

Tuesday, 30th of May 2023

9:30 Visit and historical introduction of the neighbourhoods of the medina of Tunis by Adnen El Ghali and Sofiane Dey

11:45 Presentation of initiatives and projects in Africa, Middle East and Europe:

Michael Disanka, actor, director and author

Sahar Qawasmi, co-founder and director of collective Sakiya

Sacha Kagan, Researcher at the University of Hildesheim

13:15 Lunch at L'Art Rue

15:00 Civic space: Is the climate crisis also a crisis of imagination? Panel 2 and open discussion with:

Faustin Linyekula, dancer, choreographer, director (live streaming)

Samie Blasingame, social justice facilitator, activist and researcher

Sybille Neumeyer, interdisciplinary artist, curator and researcher

17:30 Exhibition *Cluster of Matter*, by Bochra Taboubi at Caserne El Attarine, Medina of Tunis

19:30 Dinner in Bab El Medina restaurant
Bab Bhar, Medina of Tunis

Wednesday, 31st of May 2023

09:30 Meeting at Hôtel Belvédère and departure to Sebkha Sejoumi by bus

10:00 Intersectoral and hybrid practice intervention *Standing waters* by Maria Lucia Cruz Correia

Sebkha (lake) Sejoumi, South West of the city of Tunis

13:00 Lunch at Sebkha (lake) Sejoumi

15:30 Call to action: Group working session at L'Art Rue

17:30 Closing session and exploration of future perspectives

19:30 Dinner in L'Oiseau bleu restaurant, Le Kram

Colophon TURN2 Labs

TURN2 Lab#1

Experiencing Nairobi as Felt Time.

The City as Archive

3–5 November 2022 in Nairobi

A joint project of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) and the Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute (NCAI). With the support of the Goethe-Institut Kenya.

NCAI (<https://www.ncai254.com>)

Ayako Bertolli – director

Don Handa – curator

Angela Muritu – curatorial assistance

Linda Barasa – Gallery Manager

Sam Maina – Gallery Assistant

Lydia Rosasi – Front of House &

Communications Lead

Project team TURN2 Lab

Rosie Olang' Odhiambo – curator

Ollie Murage – project manager

Lynnet Ngigi – project coordinator

Isaack Kweyu, Janice Osimbo, Henry Kuria

Njunge, Dan Binama – volunteers

Joel Omolo – designer

Royce Bett – photographer

Kulturstiftung des Bundes

Anne Fleckstein – head of programme TURN2

Martha Kazungu – co-curator TURN2 Labs

Juliane Köber – communications

Goethe-Institut Kenya

(www.goethe.de/kenya)

Lilli Kobler – director

Niklas Obermann – project manager

Sheila Akwany – project manager

Sharon Mwangi – administration

Judy Ochieng – accounting

TURN2 Lab#2

JOKKO – Relationalities. From Theory to Practices

23–27 March 2023 in Dakar

A joint project of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) and KENU – Lab'Oratoire des Imaginaires. With the support of the Goethe-Institut Senegal.

KENU (<https://kenulab.org>)

Saliou Sarr aka Alibeta

Aicha Demé aka Sanka

Stephane Ibaaku Bassene aka Ibaaku

Ami Sarr

Mouhamed Diawara

Makha Bao Fall

Cedric Mabudu

Dieuwrigne

Jah gal doulsy

Ndiawar Diagne

Moise Bangoura

Kulturstiftung des Bundes

Anne Fleckstein – head of programme TURN2

Martha Kazungu – co-curator TURN2 Labs

Juliane Köber – communications

Goethe-Institut Senegal

(www.goethe.de/senegal)

Philip Küppers – director

Valeria Nabatova – project manager

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Serigne Babacar Mbow, his family and the community of Ndem, with special thanks to Serigne Fallou Mbow

All the drivers and interpreters

TURN2 Lab#3

Climate Crisis / Crisis of Imagination

29–31 May 2023 in Tunis

A joint project of the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) and L'Art Rue. With the support of the Goethe-Institut Tunisia.

L'Art Rue (<https://lartrue.org>)

Sofiane Ouissi – co-founder, managing director and co-artistic director

Selma Ouissi – co-founder, development director and co-artistic director

Jan Goossens – co-artistic director

Aisha Zaied – production manager

Bilel El Mekki – dramaturge and project manager

Clémence Herrault – production manager

Elyes Yahyaoui – production trainee

Ramzi Sioud – financial manager

Saoussen Trabelsi – accounting officer

Dhouha Chaouch – production manager

Mohamed Hedi Belkhir – technical director

Amerine Waldman – production manager

Kulturstiftung des Bundes

Anne Fleckstein – head of programme TURN2

Martha Kazungu – co-curator TURN2 Labs

Juliane Köber – communications

Goethe-Institut Tunisia

(www.goethe.de/tunisia)

Andrea Jacob – director

Ghada Jeguirim – assistant

Marwa Yousfi – administrative director

Mohamed Mansour – accountant

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Adnen El Ghali – architect, urban planner, graduate in political science and holder of a doctorate in history

Sofiane Bey – art historian and professor specialising in Ottoman architecture

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Communications

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